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NEW STATESMAN

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Next Week in Jerusalem?

Good news from the Middle East: it sounds like a contradiction in terms. For 20 years, since the Suez adventure, the world has expected the worst. So, too, have the parties concerned – as they have unfailingly and often brutally been at pains to point out. Only a year ago the prospect of an Egyptian president setting foot in Israel would have seemed inconceivable. So much for preconceived ideas. Both parties appear now anxious – indeed nervously determined – that the impossible can happen.

It would be inhuman not to feel relief, and hope. This is not just thoughtless optimism, nor an easy over-reaction to the fact that for once two bitterly hostile states are behaving in a realistic, even dispassionate, way. For whatever good comes of President Sadat's planned visit to Israel, nothing will ever wipe out the scars on the villages of South Lebanon, and whatever happens, there will be soldiers sitting in their chilly dug-outs on the Golan Heights. There can be no guarantee that even the ultimate horror of a thermo-nuclear exchange is ruled out.

This week's events may not provide an opportunity for straight talking about the Middle East – that might be asking too much – but they do provide an opportunity for honest thinking. The dance in which everyone is engaged is a delicate one, easily ruined by a clodhopper who makes a clumsy move. (See for example the instant reaction of Israel's Chief of Staff, General Gur, to the news of the visit: President Sadat might be talking peace, but was probably preparing for war.) Once the extraordinary fact of the visit has sunk in, many of the moves will be just as predictable. Geneva still lies a hard road ahead and we are, no doubt, due for a long session of ritual feinting; the moves will revolve round one question – who has given way to whom, how much, and why.

It has happened before in history that only the anti-concession party is genuinely able to make concessions: Algeria and Vietnam are the best recent examples. It would be easy to be cynical and dismissive about the motives inspiring President Sadat; the fact for example that he has to rule one of the world's most chronically disordered countries, now in a state of disarray exceptional even in its own terms; or his growing alienation from the more militant parts of the Arab world; or his need, therefore, to find allies other than the Soviet Union. It is still true that, by offering to visit Israel, he has made a gigantic concession, and one which will dismay the PLO quite as much as it already has the Syrians. President Sadat has to live with an Arab world grotesquely malformed by the Palestinian question: the only country which has made any efforts at pluralism – his own – is also the one which has staked most on peace. And corruption and poverty may see that experiment collapse.

So, if his journey is not to be in vain, he needs a gesture in return. Mr Begin is a strong man. He has expressed his willingness to talk to Arab governments which actually refuse him the right to exist. He is a hard man. When he refers to the Biblical rights of Jews over the provinces of Judaea and Samaria he seems to mean every word he says. It could be that he is so entrenched in his position on the occupied territories that he cannot move.

If that is the case, everyone's journey will have been wasted. Any real initiative now has to come from Jerusalem. Seven years ago, in an open letter to his friend Abba Eban in the NEW STATESMAN, Richard Crossman said of the Israelis that the greatest military risk they faced was not the dangers of a peace initiative but the 'certain consequences of continuing without one'. The Israelis object that it is always they who are asked to make the concessions; at the same time they pride themselves, rightly, on having the most democratic government in the Middle East, and the most just society. It is, of course, asking a great deal of a small, siege state to behave with more generosity than its neighbours. But there is one concession the Israelis could make tomorrow: a declaration that further settlements on Arab land will cease. It would cost nothing. It would be a real earnest of goodwill. And it could turn out to be the wisest decision they ever made.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

Wind and Fire

The meteorological chart looked like a walnut whirl. When the isobars are so close together, it was explained, the inevitable consequence is wind. And wind there was. At Morecambe it put an end to the pier. Throughout the North West there were floods and destruction. In Brighton it was rather less dramatic, but there were moments when I wondered whether the CBI might not be picked up by a gust, whirled around over the city and flung unceremonially into the finny deep. 'Wondered' is perhaps the wrong word. 'Fervently hoped' is more like it.

This was the CBI's first conference – a vast and lavish affair. There were 1,200 delegates, nearly all of them male. About eight miles of suiting material, a total inside leg measurement of at least 1,000 yards, 2,400 sock suspenders crammed into one room! Who could fail to be impressed? They had decided that it was time the public really heard their case. Let the message go forth, they said, from this great conference of ours . . . And what was the message? The message was: on the one hand, it is absolutely vital that our employees do not get paid too much; on the other hand, it is absolutely essential that *we* get a great deal more money ourselves. We're skint, broke, short of the necessary. Give us the moolah, they said, and give us lots of it, now, chop-chop. It was totally unfair, they said, that income should ever be taxed at more than 50 per cent. It was, as one of them beautifully expressed it, *psychologically wrong*. They were fed up with being merely rich. It would be psychologically more appropriate, they felt, to be stinkers. Well, *psychologically*, it would be much better for everybody if they were, shall we say, squillionaires, with an 'investment income' (we aren't supposed to use the term 'unearned income') of ten million shmillion greenies a week, and no questions asked. After listening to this message for a day, I felt it psychologically right to return to London..

In the Palace of Westminster it has been devolution week, with the two second readings and the guillotine debate of Wednesday. I cannot say, however, that devolution has been the foremost object of interest in everybody's mind. One did not get the impression, during the sparsely attended Welsh debate, of a great constitutional issue being thrashed out. There is, in the present proceedings, a weary sense of repetition. And if the arithmetic of the voting provided a topic of conversation in the corridors, the actual issues provoked little discussion.

Of infinitely greater interest was the emergency debate on the firemen's strike. Indeed, it was one of the most dramatic and impressive parliamentary occasions I have witnessed. Westminster is not blessed with many great speakers. The whole rhetoric and all the linguistic conventions of the place are out of date. The members are unable to speak naturally, and they are insufficiently educated to feel at home in the rhetorical style of the 19th century. When they wish to be solemn, they become portentous. What they consider to be oratory is quite bogus. There is a dreary Wig-and-Pen Club quality to their disputes.

The speech Jim Sillars made on Tuesday afternoon was not bound to be a success. Sillars is a former fireman and has a long association with the union. The issues involved in the strike are of great emotional force. But it did not follow that, merely through knowing the subject well, and feeling strongly about it, he would make such a powerful case as he did. Many politicians, particularly Labour politicians, are at their worst when talking of their origins and backgrounds. They become maudlin and sentimental. When they are emotionally involved, they lose the ability to make the most elementary distinctions. The other day I met an MP who had spent the morning at the Grunwick picket line. He told me that the scenes he had witnessed, the behaviour of the police, was the worst thing he had seen since seeing photographs of the Brownshirts and the Jews in the 1930s. I suggested that there was no comparison with the Brownshirts. At this point he accused me of being on the same side as George Ward. I objected. He grew exceedingly angry, and a deep Chaucerian flush rose to his face. As the blood pumped its way to the tip of his nose, I pointed out that it would be better to save the Brownshirts comparison for a time when a real movement like the Brownshirts was proving a similar menace. This advice reduced him to a mad, ranting, quivering condition. After a vigorous exchange of insults we parted on the worst of terms.

Here is the difference between Martin Flannery and Jim Sillars. Sillars could well have opted to rant. He could have laid on the horror with a trowel, and he could, I am certain, have made everybody in the chamber feel perfectly sick. Instead, there was an invincible reasonableness in his arguments, and his delivery was suggestive of emotion rather than overtly emotional. He held the attention of the chamber. He visibly unnerved the Home Secretary, whose hand kept making fretful journeys through his hair. The Prime Minister also looked thoroughly uncomfortable. The cloak of sweet reasonableness had been stolen from his back.

When Sillars did get round to describing the horrors of a fireman's life, he introduced his examples in a most suggestive way:

> There are many things within fire stations that are kept private – the type of horror with which firemen deal, for example. They do not normally talk about it to the general public or to Members of Parliament. It is one of those things which tend to be kept inside because there is no point in distributing the horror around. But I shall give one or two examples of the horror – not simply to secure an emotional response to the firemen but as part of his job description.

It was the flatness of this language which gained him the attention, the notion of the privacy of horror, the experience the firemen keep to themselves 'because there is no point in distributing the horror around' – 'distributing' being an exceedingly grey word, 'horror' becoming a matter of routine, and the phrase 'job description' neatly lifted from bureaucratic jargon. The three examples of private horror which he gave were bound to shock the House, but he did not dwell on their details. Instead, he corrected some public misconceptions of the fireman's life – for instance pointing out that a great blaze, in which a building is being gutted, is often easier to deal with than something less dramatic, 'when the basement of a building is smoke-logged and the job is to go in, find the seat of the fire, and put it out'. Fireman's language, this: smoke-logged, the seat of the fire.

> I remind the honourable Members that when a fireman dons breathing apparatus and enters a smoke-filled atmosphere, he is literally stepping into the unknown. If he goes into a factory, he does not know whether chemicals will explode, or whether there is a lift shaft and he will fall four storeys on to a concrete floor.

Reminding the honourable Members in this way, he reminded them of the vast gap between parliamentary language and the fact of firefighting. He pointed out that if men were to go into a fire as a fire-fighting team, they must have utmost consideration for, and confidence in, their mates. If the firemen's strike continued, and if eventually they were driven back, there would be a legacy of ill-feeling, accusations of blacklegging, a general demoralisation and mutual bitterness. 'If the firemen are defeated in the manner being urged upon the Government by the press,' the morale and commitment of the service could be permanently damaged. No argument about the virtues of the pay-code could meet this argument from experience and fact. I think most Labour Members, and probably most MPs, were made to feel thoroughly ashamed of the firemen's strike.

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Anthony Howard

The Politics of the Pillory

The image I've had in mind most of this week is that of Smike in *Nicholas Nickleby*. So used is he to cuffs and blows that it is almost second nature for him to duck or wince even before Mr Squeers actually hits him. And that increasingly has been the impression left on me by leaders of the Fire Brigades Union as, confronted with the choice of seeming heartless as human beings or gutless as strikers, they have faced the prospect of an enraged public opinion in the shape of Mr Squeers bearing down on them. 'What,' they have been repeatedly asked, 'if a child dies as a result of your strike?' – and there they have been, like poor Smike, warding off the blow before it actually falls.

'Now Firemen Feel Public Backlash' declared the *Sunday Express* with evident satisfaction last Sunday – and the implication behind its page 1 'splash' headline was all too clear. If the power workers could be driven back to their jobs by the gale force of public anger, then so could the firemen – if only people like the dentist quoted in the *Sunday Express* ('Come back after the strike is over') or the anonymous phone-caller mentioned in the *Sunday Mirror* ('Remember you've got children too') carried on with their good work.

Is that putting the matter altogether too luridly? Not, it would seem, in the view of the *Daily Mail* which, quite apart from its page 1 headlines (which we'll come to in a moment), actually used its leader column last week gloatingly to announce : 'Two can play at intimidation.' And in saying that, it was in fact, straggling rather behind the *Sunday Express* whose editor, John Junor, had this to say the Sunday before last :

> I tell you this. If a skunk and a go-slow power worker were trapped in the same enclosed space it would be the skunk who would be the first to leave in search of fresh air. If I were a surgeon and any of the greedy, grasping bunch came to me with a burst appendix I would tell him to go to hell. And if I were a barman and one of them asked me for a pint, I would throw it in his face.

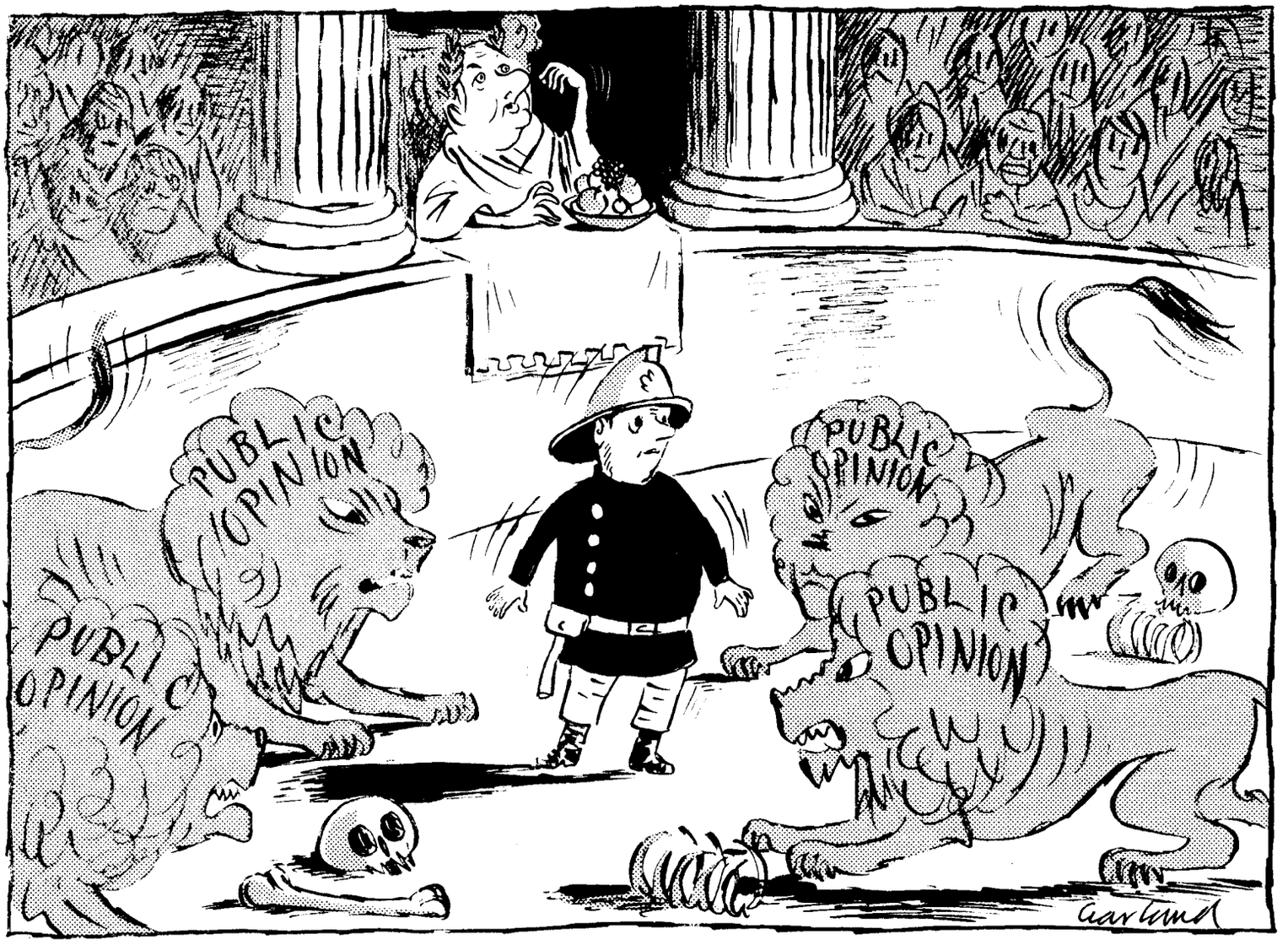
So who said the old spirit of the bear pit was dead? It has been an exhibition, too, which so far has been allowed to take place without significant challenge or protest from the Labour Party or even its sympathisers. In fact rather the reverse, since old Canon Collins could be said to be the man who declared the games open. His well-publicised sermon in St. Paul's 12 days ago clearly fell like manna from heaven on the newsdesks of Fleet Street. If a man with his record was prepared to compare public service strikers to 'terrorists' or 'hijackers' – and to announce with his penchant for the telling phrase that he had now seen 'the ugly face of socialism' – then all normal bets governing fair play were obviously off.

The rest, in terms of journalistic treatment, was probably inevitable. Here are five out of six consecutive page 1 headlines taken from the *Daily Mail* last week :

> REBELS WITHOUT A FRIEND
> THE FLAMES OF WRATH
> DARE THEY LET THE PEOPLE DIE?
> LET THERE BE LIGHT
> WOULD YOU LET THEM DIE TODAY?

The sixth, you may be intrigued to learn, was a dignified, deadpan: A RISE FOR THE ROYALS.

None of that, I shall no doubt be told, is the fault of Mr Callaghan or the Government. Nor, indeed, is it. But the present public indignation against anti-Phase Three strikes – revealed in its respectable form by the 88 per cent of public opinion that, according to ORC, supports the Government's incomes policy – is hardly something that ministers can be expected to discourage. It begins to look, after all, as if



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what Mr Wilson and Mrs Castle failed to achieve through threats of fines and the law in the summer of 1969, Mr Callaghan and Mr Foot may just conceivably bring off through a simple reliance on public opinion this coming winter.

Certainly, not since he became Prime Minister just over 18 months ago has Mr Callaghan received applause to match that which he is now getting from a predominantly Conservative press. Last Sunday in the *Sunday Telegraph* Mr Peregrine Worsthorne was virtually advising the Tories to give up all hope for the next election; and if the firemen do end up alongside the power workers as another notch on the Government's 10 per cent axe even *The Times* could find itself hard pushed to withhold its congratulations. Why, though, is such praise being lavished on Mr Callaghan? The easy answer, of course, is that by rigorously upholding what we were originally assured would be a 'voluntary' Phase Three of the incomes policy he is doing the CBI's work for it. But the Prime Minister's services to the owners and managers of British industry go beyond that. Whether the Labour Party cares to recognise it or not, the campaign that its leader and its government are engaged on this winter will, if it proves successful, leave the trade unions looking more bruised and vulnerable than they have been at any time since the general strike of 1926.

Significantly, it was the self-same public opinion card that Stanley Baldwin played then. His appeal, like Mr Callaghan's, was deliberately designed to depict the unions as set on a collision course with the nation at large. And, of couse, it worked – largely because, once people can be persuaded that any strike is not a question of a specific conflict between employers and employees but instead a challenge hurled at the entire country, those on strike will always end up looking like reckless political villains rather than economic hardship victims. That is the corner that the Government has managed to back the firemen into this week – and, with that precedent established, any union that follows in their wake (NUPE, ASLEF, even the NUM) is going to have its work cut out to escape the same fate. Indeed, it could easily be argued that what we are already witnessing in action is the grand tactical design (though without any of the accompanying constitutional complications) that lay behind Mrs Thatcher's recent proposal for a referendum whenever a serious government *v.* union confrontation threatened.

What, however, goes out of the window even under Mr Callaghan's informal version of that procedure is, inevitably, any concept of economic justice. Hard cases do not so much make bad law as bad politics – a point that the Prime Minister himself seemed to be conceding when, having been beleagured by a group of firemen down at Neath last weekend, he somewhat complacently announced: 'There is no such thing as perfect justice in this world.' It was not perhaps the kind of phrase that one would expect to come trippingly from the tongue of a Labour Prime Minister; but then neither is the strategy that Mr Callaghan's government now seems to be embarked on one that would normally be expected from a Labour government. To put the point at its simplest, resisting public sector wage claims is one thing: choosing to rely on public opinion to intimidate those putting them forward is something rather different.

For years the Labour movement has shuddered as the Tories have tried to do exactly that. The last time the power workers were driven back to work during the lifetime of the Heath government of 1970-74, Labour spokesmen were certainly not slow to denounce a 'lions den' TV programme that David Frost then put on the air. Where were such denunciations or protests last week? With the solitary exception of the honourable, if somewhat muffled, action of Joe Ashton in resigning his post as a government whip, it is hard to recall any. That, no doubt, is in its way a tribute to Mr Callaghan's mastery of his party. But it is also a proof of something else: that a Labour Party, or a Labour leadership, that makes dishing Mrs Thatcher its number one priority is also bound to end up ditching a good deal of its own ideology as well.

Stuart Holland

Fraser Blazes the Thatcher Trail

Secular myths spawn on economic depression. As global capitalism seems to have lost its virtue, many politicians on the Right imagine themselves as modern Parsifals, questing the grail of a pure market economy unadulterated by trade union power or state interference. Unlike Parsifal, however, few such politicians are simple fools. Some are angels of a very dubious hue. Malcolm Fraser, Australia's Prime Minister, having connived in Sir John Kerr's sacking of the Whitlam government two years ago, is now rushing to a December election with a heavy tread on trades union rights.

Of course, in Australia unions are relatively strong. The recent power strike in Victoria backed by unions country-wide, is one illustration. Nor is there any doubt that they can undertake political strikes and stoppages, as was demonstrated by their pre-war blockage of iron ore exports to Japan, their role against Australian involvement in the Vietnam war and their current campaign against the mining and export of uranium.

In general, the stance of leading unions in the Australian political scene is radical, but also democratic and reformist. The union movement does not so much want to rule as to maintain a legitimate role in the system. And it is precisely this legitimacy which is now being challenged. Basically, the Government is finding it hard to explain the current crisis in the economy. Unemployment is over 5 per cent, and is projected to rise to around 7 per cent when school leavers come on to the labour market in January. Despite statistical cosmetics, inflation is running at around 13 per cent and shows no clear signs of falling.

Manufacturing industry is in crisis on several counts. Apart from the world crisis in trade and demand, Australia has only gained a modern industrial capacity since the war. Some of its smaller firms struggled from infancy to adolescence under significant protection. The only companies with global muscle power are multinationals, mainly British and American.

The result is a dual economic structure. The top 200 firms control half the country's manufacturing, and nearly half of these are foreign-owned They have become increasingly sensitive to the advantages of low cost labour in union and tax havens in South-East Asia, and have been holding back from investment in Australia. Smaller manufacturing firms – some 30,000 in all – are being squeezed both by big league competition and by low cost imports. Equally importantly, there is some evidence that the mining lobby, dominating Australia's raw materials, wants to run down its own domestic industry and increase manufactured imports in return for a structural shift in trade to exports of minerals.

Key trades unions see this, unsurprisingly, with alarm. Having recently escaped a questionable dependence on wheat and sheep, they have no desire to become the quarry of South East Asia. Modern mining, especially in open-cast sites, offers few enough jobs to compensate for the contraction of manufacturing. Besides, while capital in Australia, or elsewhere, would be glad enough for the state to take over ailing sectors like shipbuilding, it strenuously resists a public stake in minerals.

Such wider issues underlie the specific struggle on the question of uranium exports,

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where unions are concerned about both safety and proliferation. They not only oppose mining, but also have made plain that they will try to block shipment. In return, Fraser has indicated that if necessary he will use troops to transport and ship the stuff, from naval rather than civilian docks.

For some time it looked as if the Government might call a referendum on the uranium issue. Now it has called an election, linking uranium with the general question of trade union power and 'who rules'. The parallels with Heath, the miners and February 1974 seem all too clear. Yet while Heath lost the election, Fraser on present form stands to win, even if with a reduced majority. Besides, the anti-union legislation which gained passage through the Australian Senate last month makes Heath's Industrial Relations Act look like a koala bears' picnic.

For instance, the new Act gives powers to an Industrial Relations Bureau which can initiate criminal proceedings against both unions and individual unionists with the threat of not only fines and de-registration but also prison sentences. The Bureau also would be able to enter any trade union office and examine any document which it considers relevant to the prosecution involved. If trade unions resort to obstruction of the Bureau – for instance, through picketing union offices – they are de facto guilty of a culpable offence. Flouting either its actions or decisions can entail the dismissal of union officers *and* debarring them from standing for office again. This goes either for shop stewards or for general secretaries. In short, if you don't gaol them, you can sack them.

It is perhaps hardly surprising that Mrs Thatcher, on a visit to Australia, praised Fraser's new stand against the unions. If he wins next month, we can expect several parallels to be drawn for Britain. Not least, the new legislation opens the prospect of a plebiscite on individual union powers, comparable with and possibly underlying the recent Thatcher proposal for a referendum on an official strike.

It is in such a context that many unionists lament the indecisiveness of the Whitlam-led Labour opposition. Comparisons inevitably are made between its punch-drunk posture after the Kerr knockout, and the inaction of former Labour ministers after the election defeat of 1970. What is missing is a formulated economic and political programme on which the Labour movement can take a stand against Fraser rather than leave him with the prospects of a two-issue election on uranium and the power of the unions. There is considerable distress at State level, both in the Labour Party and the unions, that the two super-stars of their political firmament – Whitlam and Bob Hawke of the Australian TUC – seem more concerned with the question of which of them should lead the Labour Party in opposition than on countering Fraser's confrontation politics.

The uranium issue is emotive. One of its most effective posters advises you what to do in the event of a nuclear accident – kiss your children goodbye. Many people on the Left in Australia now are persuaded that if Fraser wins an election in December they can do the same for trade union rights.

Roger Omond

Portrait of Donald Woods

Donald Woods is a very untypical South African editor. For one thing, he is not allowed to enter his rather scruffy office with portraits of Churchill and Smuts on one wall until 31 October 1982. For another, he may soon be in gaol. And all because during his 12-year reign as the often benevolently despotic editor of the liberal *Daily Dispatch* in East London, he dared to ask questions that the Pretoria Government would have preferred to remain unasked.

At the end of this week an Appellate Division court in the drab Orange Free State capital of Bloemfontein will begin to decide whether Woods should go to gaol for six months. His crime? Refusing to tell police who exactly had told him that one of their colleagues was believed to be a thief and a vandal. The *real* crime that has landed him in so much trouble? Being a pain in the neck to Police Minister J. T. Kruger and his fellow ministers. For *his* pains, Woods has had slogans painted on his house, a car shot up, his telephone tapped, anonymous phone calls made threatening his wife and five children, a sentence of six months' imprisonment and, last month, a banning order for five years.

Kruger can be held responsible for only the last two: Woods was told some time ago that a certain warrant officer 'Seksie' Hattingh was believed to have been responsible for a break-in at the offices of the Black Community Programmes – one of the organisations banned the same day as Woods – in King William's Town.

Woods happened to be going to Pretoria shortly afterwards, where he arranged to see Kruger and the head of BOSS, General Hendrik van den Bergh. He told them of the accusation and of another one: that the same Hattingh had once smashed the car windscreen of author and former Liberal Party leader Alan Paton. For the sake of race relations in the Border area, where his paper circulates to about 150,000 readers, he asked them to deal with Hattingh administratively, promising he would not print the charges. Then he returned to his rambling surburban home, happy that he had done his civic duty with unusual discretion. Kruger or someone in the Special Branch took a different view. After a certain amount of ritualistic questioning and paperwork Woods was taken to court to reveal the name of one informant: the other informant who had detailed the Paton incident had already told Woods to reveal his name. Woods said he would not disclose his one source's name and was promptly sentenced to six months' imprisonment. He appealed and some months later was acquitted on technical grounds.

Anywhere else in the world the authorities might have conceded defeat. Kruger and Co. didn't and won the right to appeal against the appeal. This week's hearing will settle this long-running legal fight. Woods won't be in court, however. He has been refused permission by the Chief Magistrate of East London, presumably acting on the 'advice' of the Special Branch, for exemption from his banning order which confines him to East London. He has stayed there since 6.45 a.m. on 20 October, 14 hours after he was served with the five-year banning order at Johannesburg airport, 90 minutes before he was due to fly off on a visit to the United States and Australia. Bannings have been termed 'civil death': on the gregarious Woods the restrictions must chafe particularly harshly. To deprive him of an audience of more than one person at a time (three people constitute an illegal gathering) is like demanding that an actor plays to an empty house.

There is a touch of theatre about Woods. His mimicry of Prime Minister Vorster and ex-Opposition leader Sir de Villiers Graaff is superb. His chess is good, his musical ability (despite not being able to read a note of music) sufficiently good for a state-subsidised orchestra to have performed a composition of his. Ironically, he donated a chess set to the gaol where he is likely to serve his sentence if the state wins its appeal. But it's unlikely that the prison authorities will allow him to take his mini-grand piano bought on the proceeds of a slander suit against a former cabinet minister into his prison cell. Nor is he likely to be able to read his own newspaper. Nor will the door be open to any member of his staff who has a problem. And, unless the prison grapevine is good, he may not know the result of court inquiries into the death in detention of his closest friend, Black Consciousness leader Steve Biko. That will hurt the most.

Biko changed Woods from being almost an archetypal white liberal into a more committed and thoughtful radical. He was, at one stage, a strong critic of the first Black Consciousness movements on the grounds that they were practising racism in reverse. Biko, 12 years his junior, introduced him to the world of peaceful black politics outside the Bantustan system. Then two months ago Biko died in a Pretoria prison cell. Woods barnstormed the country asking Kruger awkward questions on public platforms and through the press. Just over a month later he was banned.

In a few weeks time he may be gaoled for the first time. It may not be the last: his banning orders are so restrictive that it is almost humanly impossible not to break one or more of the provisions. As cabinet ministers trudge from election meeting to election meeting hawking their professed belief in press freedom – as long as the press is 'responsible' – there may be two editors in gaol. Percy Qoboza, editor of the *World* newspaper, is already in preventive detention. Woods and Qoboza won't meet: the apartheid both were trying to have dismantled is rigidly applied behind bars.

East London

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Javed Jabbar

General Zia and the Bhutto Legend

Just a year ago at a mutual friend's house in Lahore I met Ahmed Raza Kasuri, a member of the National Assembly of Pakistan, an early supporter of Bhutto and also one of the first to gain his displeasure. As a student union figure in the late 1960s he was not taken very seriously, even after he won election in December 1970 on the People's Party bandwagon. Soon after, however, just as Yahya, Mujib and Bhutto were determining the immediate destiny of the country, Kasuri acquired a cavalier reputation by going to Dacca with the intention of attending the inaugural session of the Assembly in defiance of Bhutto's specific boycott order. For that impertinent piece of behaviour Kasuri might have earned a patronising footnote in a Bhutto biography. Now, however, his status as the aggrieved party in the on-going murder case in the Punjab High Court in which Bhutto is accused of being responsible for the murder of Kasuri's father assures him of an ironically prominent place in the history books.

Strangely enough, a year ago, he was the only person I met who was convinced that the biggest mistake Bhutto could make would be to call an election in 1977. In response to my sceptical look (which was based on the knowledge of Bhutto's vice-like grip on the country's institutions and the mass media). Kasuri offered the argument that the mere act of allowing opposition parties to hold public rallies, of letting people speak their minds, would unleash so much suppressed anger – 'open a Pandora's box' as he put it – that it would snowball into a movement of protest that Bhutto would ultimately be unable to control.

It was a remarkably correct forecast and it indicates that the roots of the present crisis lie not in the tumult and the shouting of 1977 but in the long silence that began – or resumed – in 1971. Of course, silence on fundamental issues and a bombast on pietistic concepts have been a continuous feature of Pakistan's history. A concern for religion in a state uniquely established on the specific basis of Islamic ideology, in a region dominated by a 600-million strong secular India, is perfectly natural. But that concern has always been used to obfuscate rather than to enlighten. It was precisely here that Bhutto failed Pakistan. For it was he who, in 1970, identified the economic conditions of the large mass of people as the principal political issue and at the same time offered a solution based on the principles of Islam, in the form of 'Islamic socialism'.

As a concept, Islamic socialism was new enough and exciting enough to galvanise the energies of millions of people. In practice it could not be related to the real problems of the country. The People's Party adopted it as an inspired and imaginative electoral slogan: it did not arrive at it as a doctrine of commitment. Faced by the enormous and complex problems of the economy, Bhutto's vision of Islamic socialism very quickly shrank to simple nationalisation and state intervention.

More crucially, the leader who had given a voice to the poor millions for the first time in Pakistan's history, soon proceeded to replace their voice with his own – on radio and on television – day in, day out. The leader, who had promised to disband the National Press Trust and repeal repressive press laws, not only retained them; he used them with surprising ease and intensity. The man who had promised 'a flowering of talent' in the country in his very first address as head of government, recruited a mixed assortment of reactionary feudal landlords and urban gangsters to senior party and cabinet posts. At lower levels, a particular provincial identity or a useful family connection became absolute guarantees of secure employment. A pledge to create 'an open and free atmosphere where our people can breathe' became instead the menace of a specially created federal security force, armed and mobile, able to hound a single individual or terrorise an entire town. A former practising lawyer, who spoke of ensuring justice for all, instituted a dozen special tribunals to convict and imprison dissenters within his own party and outside it.

And yet if one carries all these bitter truths into a village in the Punjab – as I did a few weeks ago – and lines them up like shining liberal urban silverware, a peasant's face creases into a slow smile of scorn, almost contempt. 'So what?' he snarls. 'It's all been done before. It will be done again.' This backlash of sympathy for Bhutto is now the greatest challenge facing the new military regime. The army has intervened three times in Pakistan's history and each time it has created political problems greater than the ones it sought to cure. While Field Marshal Ayub Khan's government appeared to the world to bring political stability and economic development in the 1960s, it also encouraged the widening of the chasm between East and West Pakistan and gave way only to another military regime, not a political one. Yahya Khan, after supervising the first ever elections on the basis of adult franchise in an eminently free and fair manner, then suffered a change of heart when the time to hand over power drew near. And now General Zia ul-Haq, initially elevated over the heads of senior generals to the position of Chief of Staff by Bhutto himself, contemplates not only the depressing legacy of his military predecessors but also the sad political sediment of his own first four months of military rule.

It is difficult to doubt Zia ul-Haq's sincerity of purpose. It is quite easy to doubt the sagacity of his actions, if only because he has reversed his own decisions so often on so many fundamental matters. After a firm and categorical pledge to hold elections within 90 days of taking office – a pledged repeated *ad nauseam* up to the very end of September, i.e. just three weeks before the scheduled election – the General announced an indefinite postponement. In turn this was due to a reversal of another promise, which was that the military regime would not prosecute any political leader who had held office in the past five years or who had been active in the March elections. Instead, the regime would collect the evidence and hand it over to the newly elected Government for legal action. Reversing this decision soon after Bhutto's triumphant visits to Lahore, on initially being released from protective custody, the regime embarked on legal actions of its own in several cases including the Kasuri murder case. Such quick reversals have highlighted the political naïveté of the regime, have detracted from its image of sincerity and have generated great sympathy for Bhutto.

And here, in a sense, General Zia himself has been Bhutto's ally. In the eyes of the common man, the military regime has aligned itself with the affluent and privileged classes. For example, its adviser on industries declared recently that, 'the 22 leading industrial families helped to build Pakistan'. In a country where the average industrial worker takes home less than $40 a month, such a statement showed a serious lack of political sensitivity, particularly when it is remembered that Bhutto made the wealth of the 22 families a rallying cry for the workers and the peasants. A rigid and disciplinarian approach to crime through the public whipping of corrupt cops and petty thieves has also antagonised the masses. 'No wealthy and corrupt big businessman has so far been flogged', said an industrial worker in Karachi. 'At least Bhutto knew who the real crooks are.'

This precious knowledge of who the real villains are may be cold comfort for Bhutto as he fights for his political, if not his physical, survival. Yet in Pakistan the political scene can change very rapidly. A week ago the retired Air Marshal Afghar Khan who heads the Pehrik-i-Iftiqlal (Movement for Emancipation) took his party out of the Pakistan National Alliance. This was the grouping of nine political parties formed in January this year a few days after Bhutto announced his decision to call elections. With the principal objective achieved – the removal of Bhutto from power – Afghar Khan believes that his party will suffer electorally if it stays within the Alliance. Yet outside it the Pehrik will have to work overtime to broaden its patchy areas of support and develop an effective nationwide organisation which reflects the high personal stature of Afghar Khan. Even if he currently appears to be the most acceptable national leader for the next few years, his party is almost desperately short of a vigourous and attractive second-level leadership. General Zia will certainly be playing for high stakes if he has now decided that in any eventual election the Air Marshal is the card he needs to play against Bhutto.

Karachi

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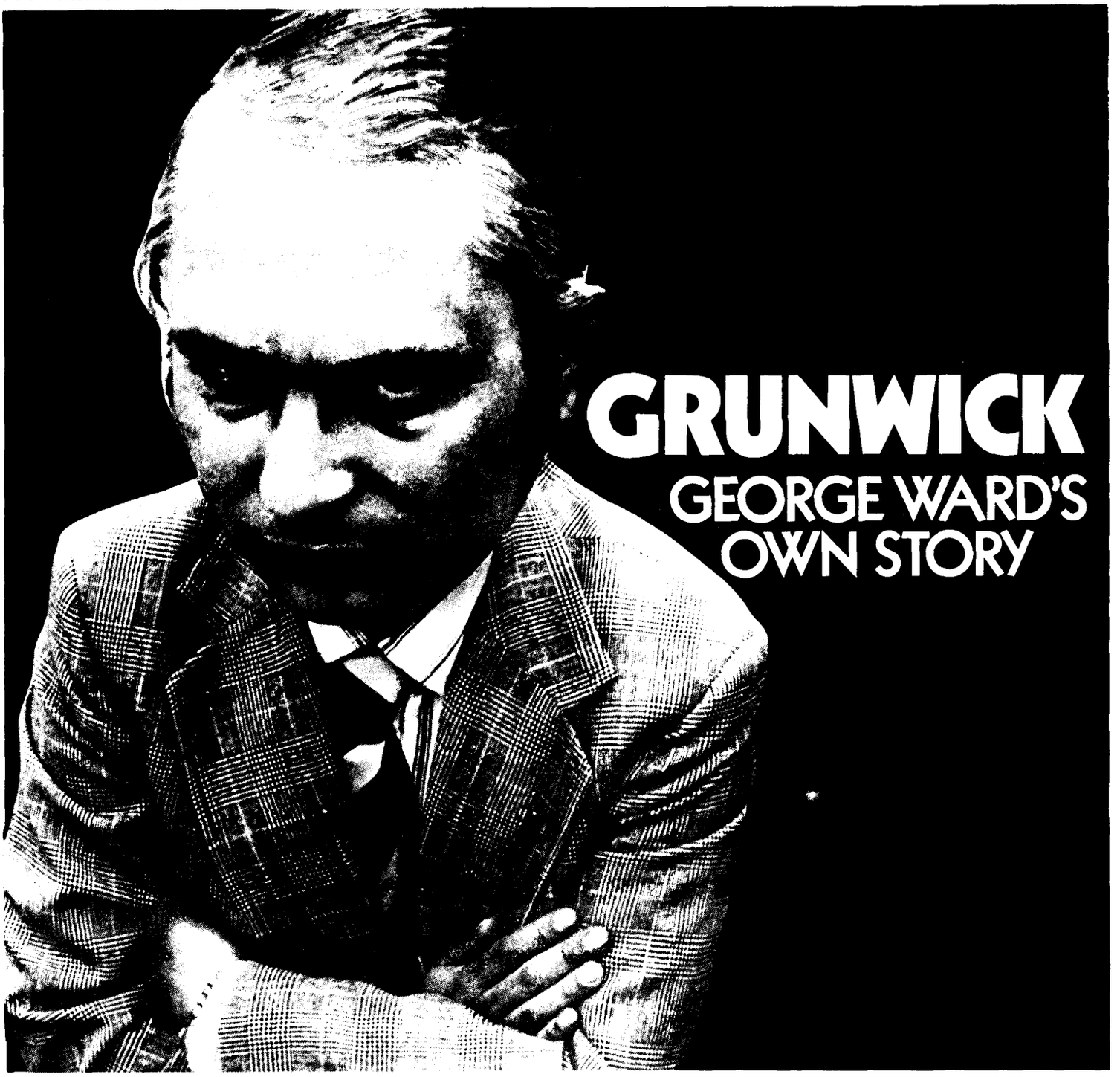

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Roy Hattersley

Managing the Mixed Economy

Socialism and the mixed economy are entirely compatible. That belief is shared by almost every Labour voter and a vast majority of Labour Party members. Support for the mixed economy has been embodied – directly or by implication – in every decision that any Labour government has ever made. Since *Socialism and the New Economic Order* – the manifesto of 1918 which first committed the party to a programme of public ownership – we have invariably adopted the Tawney technique for determining the merits of additional nationalisation: 'Whether, in any particular instance, it is desirable or not is a question to be decided in the light, not of resounding affirmation of the virtues of either free enterprise or of socialism, but on the facts of the case.' Yet a few of our most devoted supporters – and all of our bitterest enemies – insist that traditionally we are totally opposed to private enterprise and that our hopes really rest on a Soviet-style economy in which most, if not all, economic activity is publicly owned or state controlled.

Such a reputation carries with it obvious electoral dangers. But we ought not to overestimate the votes we have lost because *specific* items of nationalisation appeared in our programme. If public ownership is an electoral liability, it is not because we occasionally express a precise intention to nationalise individual companies, but because we damage ourselves by encouraging the general suspicion that we would like to nationalise everything and by failing to argue positively for those items of public ownership which are demonstrably right. The real problem caused by our reputation as 'a public ownership party' concerns not what others say about us but what we think about ourselves. That problem takes four forms.

First, when election manifestos have been prepared, we have sometimes been so conscious of our alleged support for overall public ownership that we have excluded from our programme individual items which – according to the Tawney criteria – ought to be included. If, during the last 30 years, we had rigorously applied Tawney's empirical rule we would have nationalised more, not less.

Second, because of the formal commitment to the 'common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange', we are encouraged literally to equate socialism with public ownership. That belief is occasionally extended into the insistence that true socialism is impossible within the mixed economy and that where public ownership is to be found, there also is socialism. The idea that any society in which the public sector dominates the economy is automatically a socialist society is offensive as well as foolish. The great ideal of democratic socialism can neither be expressed nor achieved by a doctrine solely concerned with economic organisation. Forms of economic organisation can contribute to its attainment but they cannot in themselves constitute a socialist society. If socialism is about freedom as well as equality, the Federal Republic is more 'socialist' than East Germany. We ought not to be afraid to say so.

Third, support for public ownership *in principle* encourages us to look uncritically at the current operation of the public sector. Even the vast impersonal public utilities are sacrosanct, because they are the word made flesh. As a result, we remain unsure of their real role in society, uncertain whether they should observe the commercial standards of the private sector or accept special social obligations as part of their public duty.

Fourth, the equation of socialism and public ownership tempts us to ignore our potential influence on the private sector. We either write it off as an inappropriate vehicle for socialist advance or leave it to its own devices, whilst we fulfil our socialist obligation with an occasional extension of the public sector. We do too little to influence the day-to-day decisions of both public and private enterprise. Our motivation may be different in each case – one is beyond improvement, the other beyond hope. But the result is the same. The Government intervenes far too little.

Not until 1975 with the creation of the industrial strategy did we begin the real attempt to exercise detailed, specific and selective control over the private sector of the economy. That process should be extended, not as an alternative to public ownership, but as a complementary technique for the creation of a society which becomes simultaneously more free, more equal and more prosperous.

The extremes of both Left and Right insist that such a society is unattainable. The far Left still repeat ancient clichés about capitalism's internal contradiction and its imminent destruction, combined with the allegation that social democracy provides no more than a crutch for a crippled system. In fact, the mixed economy is remarkably resilient. Between the wars – a period of deep depression and the stagnation which accompanies slump – our real national income rose by 31 per cent and real wages by 20 per cent. Between 1955 and 1975 – a period in which some people perceived nothing but doom and decay – GDP increased by 64 per cent and real wages by 82 per cent.

The mixed economy, run by sophisticated entrepreneurs ready to bend with the wind of social pressure rather than break the system, recovers very quickly. If left to itself the price of recovery may be 3 million unemployed and vast areas of decay and dereliction. But it does not wither away. In reality we have only three options:

(1) To work actively for complete public ownership and the destruction of the private element within the mixed economy. That path is not open to those of us who believe that liberty is an essential ingredient of socialism, that diversity is to be encouraged and dissent is to be accepted.

(2) To leave the private sector generally unregulated, hoping that individual companies will both recognise and maximise their own interest and that national prosperity will inevitably follow without unacceptable reductions in social welfare – an analysis of the economy which owes nothing to the evidence of history.

(3) To intervene in the operation of the mixed economy when – according to our perception of the national interest – specific government action is justified.

The far Right – matching the determinism of the Left with a theory of historical inevitability of its own – claims that intervention can only inhibit growth and discourage enterprise. The corollary to their argument is that when the economy is left to itself, industrial efficiency and economic success automatically follow. The argument is converted from assertion into 'demonstrable fact' by sleight of hand. Criteria for judging its success are defined in terms which only that philosophy can satisfy. Thus the free economy 'succeeds' because it returns to some sort of natural equilibrium after it has driven companies to bankruptcy and workers on to the dole. Thus the free economies of the 19th century were said to be 'successful', despite their absolute disregard for social welfare.

It is doubtful if the apparently unfeeling capitalists of the 19th century were even as efficient as their apologists pretend. It was during the high summer of Victorian 'prosperity' that most of our present economic troubles began. It was the famous entrepreneurs of the 1860s and 1870s who – wholly unimpeded by government – began the disastrous tradition of low domestic capital investment. It was the iron masters and engineers of Edwardian Britain who (unlike their German and American counterparts) ignored the need to build a more technologically based industry run by scientists and engineers and put their faith in men who could manipulate stock exchanges and maximise short-term returns.

Defenders of the free, wholly unfettered, market attach too little value to the sort of 'success' that properly attracts socialists. Indeed, Professor Hayek insists that 'social justice is a meaningless concept'. But even according to their own harsh material standards they are wrong – wrong about the free

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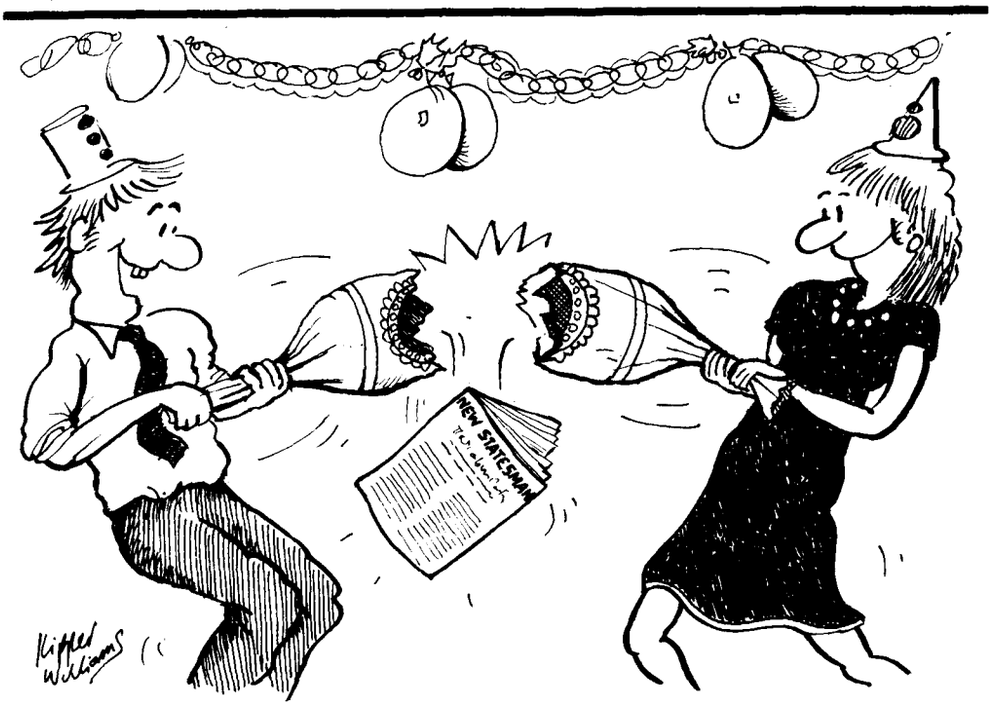
market's performance, its potential and even its historic existence. The free market, automatically solving its own problems, maximising company efficiency, driving the indolent out of business and encouraging expansion by the industrious and inventive, never existed. Perfect competition is what sentimental Victorians wrongly believed existed in medieval England. Certainly Adam Smith never pretended that the perfect state he described existed in the real world. He knew that when the economy is left to itself, companies combine, monopolies develop, agreements in restraint of trade are signed and cartels are formed: 'People of the same trade rarely meet together, even for merriment and diversion, but the conversation ends in conspiracy against the public or in some contrivance to raise prices.'

Adam Smith believed that in a free society, 'it is impossible indeed to prevent such meetings by any law which either could be executed or would be consistent with liberty and justice'. That is, naturally enough, a wholly 18th-century view of freedom. For Adam Smith freedom, being equated with the absence of government intervention, had to allow conspirators to conspire. For the same reason, he denied the public's right to be protected against conspiracy. It is a view of freedom which is increasingly espoused by the Tory Party. While it is not a trap into which the Labour Party will fall, other pitfalls litter our path towards selective economic management. One is our traditional opposition to competition.

In the 19th century competition was economically ruthless and socially wasteful. Costs were cut and markets expanded by sending sailors to sea in coffin ships, reducing wages and increasing working hours, mixing sand with the sugar, and water with beer. All these excesses were justified by the mystical belief in economic natural selection – salvation by the 'hidden hand'. In modern economic society the struggle for greater efficiency cannot be accompanied by such ruthless brutality. Twenty years of protective legislation and a hundred years of increasingly powerful unions prevent it.

Competition now exists within the rules of civilised society. It can, and ought to, be a genuine contest between comparable companies. The prize is the success that comes from best meeting the needs of the consumer – the commercial expansion that results from selling better quality products at a lower price. If competition is still thought to be synonymous with capitalism, it is at least a form of capitalism in which because of the existence of rival companies willing to accept a smaller profit, expansion is encouraged, and investment promoted in the struggle to achieve optimum size.

The alternative to competition is not a pattern of arcadian industry which preserves steady output, protects a stable workforce and maintains a living wage. In the absence of competition monopolies and cartels restrict the market, keep prices and profits artificially high and acquire the political power that comes from the exclusive production of essential commodities. Competition is not just another form of capitalism which no decent socialist would preserve or support. That at least was Lenin's view:



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> Capitalism long ago abolished small, independent commodity production, under which competition could develop enterprise, energy and bold initiative to any considerable extent, and substituted for it . . . joint companies, syndicates and other monopolies . . . Now that a socialist government is in power our task is to organise competition.

It is a view that ought to be held across the socialist spectrum. Hugh Gaitskell, making his maiden speech on 24 August 1945, put the position simply: 'If you are going to have private enterprise, it is better to have it competitive and the time has come when we have to have anti-monopoly legislation.' That was his judgment after five years' working in the Board of Trade on the management of the mixed economy. The paper which concluded and summarised his work contained two passages of pure socialist truth as applicable today as they were in the year the war ended.

> This country must restore adaptability and enterprise to its industries and must break through the net of trade restrictions, if it is to succeed in raising industrial efficiency, in maintaining employment at a high level, and so in improving the standard of life . . . An attack on monopoly is not to be confused with an attack on private enterprise. On the contrary, private enterprise and private monopoly are ultimately incompatible. In a democratic country, the public must be the master of industry. This condition is sufficiently satisfied in trades in which free competition is maintained; but where free competition does not exist, it can only be satisfied by the introduction of adequate measures of government control or supervision over monopolies, or by actual state ownership. Thus the larger the sphere of monopoly, the smaller must ultimately become the sphere of private enterprise.

Consumers' Role

That is more than an argument about the economic value of competition. Hugh Gaitskell was concerned about economic power as well as industrial efficiency. In the competitive condition individual companies compete for the consumers' favour and custom. That makes the consumer, if not the master of the economy, at least an influential voice in a wide range of commercial decisions. It shifts some of the power from the board room and the annual meeting into the hands of the recipients of goods and services – the generality of people to whose wishes the sensitive economy ought to respond. Those needs will not necessarily be met simply by involving trade unions in company management. An extension of industrial democracy is wholly desirable but it does not meet all our democratic demands. It is easy to imagine a coincidence of interest between workers and owners which would be directly against the consumers' interest – the continuation of ancient inefficiencies, the artificial protection of prices and therefore wages, a refusal to innovate. Only competition, or in its absence state intervention, can prevent that from ever happening.

Hugh Gaitskell's work led to the Monopolies Bill of 1948 and the beginning of active competition policy. It gave us a measure of power over monopolies. Twenty-five years later, the Government acquired the ability to prevent and postpone mergers. But, in the meantime, the British economy had become the most concentrated in the Western world. In Britain the hundred largest firms account for 42 per cent of net manufacturing output. In America the figure is 32 per cent, in Germany 22 per cent. And the amalgamations which brought that concentration about were not carefully planned acts of industrial integration aimed at creating the most efficient companies. Most were financial devices aimed at making money not goods. On the available evidence most recent mergers failed even to live up to the hopes of their sponsors. Many did not even match the results enjoyed by the individual companies before amalgamation.

The power to break up monopolies and prevent mergers is a legitimate part of the socialist planning process. Without government intervention, the hand of competition would be hidden so deep that its effects as well as its existence would be invisible. But producing the conditions for creative competition is no more than the framework of our new economic order. Other forms of intervention must be accommodated within it.

Government Function

There must be the positive encouragement of growth and amalgamation in industries where real efficiency and new output could be increased by the creation of larger production units. In some cases that may involve the creation of companies which, by expanding to optimum size, dominate the market. Where it is the plain and obvious judgment that production is best organised on such a scale it is the Government's duty to allow – indeed to encourage, support and sometimes even finance – the creation of the monopoly. But a clear distinction has to be drawn between the merger which creates the most efficient size of operating unit, and the takeover which is no more than a stock exchange contrivance. But even the merger with positive industrial advantages may – by its size – achieve a position so dominant in its market that it can freely exploit the consumer. Freed from the rigour of competition it may also dissipate the economies of scale and grow simply inefficient.

But a further form of specific government intervention must guard against such excesses and mistakes. When competition does not hold down prices and promote efficiency, the Government must perform that task. It must exercise such influence over the nationalised corporations which are unrestrained by market forces, and over monopolies left to exist in their monopoly form in order that they may enjoy the economies of scale. It must be ready to exert the same pressure on any sector or company which – because of consumer ignorance or market domination – is able to act against the public interest.

Like the market itself it will affect and influence commercial behaviour at the point when easily recognised rules are broken. According to Adam Smith, when prices are kept artificially high, output arbitrarily restricted and a company's chief characteristics are sloth and incompetence, more efficient competitors rush in and present it with the alternatives of extinction or improvement. Often in the real world that either does not happen or happens so slowly that reform and replacement are preceded by a period of unacceptable economic loss. A government agency is needed to perform the role competition sometimes fails to discharge.

Employment Obligations

An agency which performs that task will have to operate selectively. It cannot enforce *general* rules to which every company must conform, or provide universal definitions of a just price, reasonable profit and fair wage. General rules are by their nature both indiscriminate and ineffective. They are either drawn so tightly that they catch firms which should be exempt or are constructed so loosely that companies which should be included escape. An agency which replaces the competitive function must operate flexibly. The general principles of the operation need to be governed by law as do the sanctions by which those principles are enforced. But the specific application case by case must be left to the discretion of the agency.

None of this is an argument against a further form of intervention which must cut across the normal rules of the competitive market. The Government must intervene to provide added employment opportunities in areas of special need. The areas may be industrial or geographical. Where the social and economic costs of allowing key companies to collapse are too great to be accepted the government has clearly defined roles. The short-term duty is rescue. The long-term obligation is the recreation of independent viability. Sometimes that duty will be performed in companies operating in areas of generally high economic activity. More often it will be concentrated in regions of historic decline where whole new industries are needed to replace the decaying trades and crafts left to us in the legacy of 19th-century capitalism.

The only way to consider the efficacy of the policy which supports and keeps in business companies which would otherwise collapse, encourages amalgamations in industry which would otherwise be fragmented or takes investment from the prosperous South East and relocates it in Wales, or the central belt of Scotland, is a case by case analysis of the costs and benefits such policies involve. We have to compare both the cost of intervention and the cost of leaving the economy to operate free of government control.

The costs of government intervention are easily calculated. The price of support for a new technology, the level of investment in a particular company, the total amount of public expenditure devoted to regional assistance are set out publicly, discussed and debated. The costs of not intervening are more difficult to calculate. But they are no less real.

For example, the price to be met of failing to invest in the regions includes the damage done to a generation of children who drift from school into immediate unemployment. Their fate is not only a moral disgrace. It does economic damage to a nation which needs to invest and expand. But we cannot put a figure on the

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economic loss their unemployment causes. In consequence the full costs of failing to provide adequate regional policies can never be measured against the price of providing them.

Even so, some of the benefits of regional policy can be roughly calculated. Between 1960 and 1976 our regional policy created or saved nearly 300,000 jobs in manufacturing industry in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Northern Region. If we assume that regional incentives had a comparable effect in the South West development area and on Merseyside and if we add the results of our investment in shipbuilding, the Government's regional policy has provided 385,000 jobs which would not otherwise exist.

That is a formidable, finite achievement to be set against the intangible benefits of laissez faire. For no one has yet calculated how many pounds left to fructify in the pockets of the people would actually find their way into Tyneside industry or create new investment and extra jobs in South Wales. But the non-interventionists are not easily daunted. Even after the conclusive calculations of loss and gain have been made they can still fall back into the last refuge – the immorality, as opposed to disutility, of government intervention.

'Taxing people is wrong' says S. E. Finer, the Gladstone Professor of Government in the University of Oxford, but he does not go on to explain whether or not it is equally immoral to deny people the basic necessities – a decent house, an adequate school, the prospects of permanent employment – which taxes provide. The idea that every increase in public expenditure is a denial of freedom to the subscribing taxpayer is a perverse view of liberty. The contention that every extension of government intervention is a denial of the inalienable rights of the entrepreneur depends upon a very special definition of freedom. It is a definition that suits the privileged classes fighting to retain their privilege – principally the privilege to buy and sell simply according to no other law than their purchasing power.

Mr Michael Jensen of New York's Rochester University described and defended such a philosophy with terrifying frankness in the October issue of *The Banker*:

> The rights of free speech and the right to vote and the other political freedoms which we normally hold in such high regard are important to me only to the extent that they influence our abilities to protect the freedom of choice granted to us in the private sector of the economy.

That may be a moral precept on which Professor Hayek and Friedman are prepared to advance towards the 21st century. It may well be that Sir Keith Joseph and Mrs Thatcher are willing to follow. But it will not satisfy the aspirations of those of us who want to see constant economic expansion harnessed in the interests of greater equality and wider freedom. That can only be obtained within the mixed economy. But it must be a mixed economy in which the Government consciously creates the conditions of progress by enlisting the forces of competition when that is possible and by directly intervening when the forces of competition fail.

ADVERTISEMENT

An Open Letter to President Carter

Dear Mr President,

I was born and educated in Czechoslovakia. I cared little whether I was a Jew or not, despite the fact that my mother, a widow, always dreamed of Zion as the only possible home for the Jews. Now she continues her dreams in Auschwitz together with my brother and over twenty aunts, uncles and cousins from my native town. History has made me realise that I am a Jew, whether I like it or not, and made of me a very self-conscious Jew who wants to settle in Israel, where my daughter and grandchildren live. I fully appreciate the personal risk involved, as I am aware that Israel might become a mini-Auschwitz owing to Arab rapacity. No gasping, please. If Arabs can kill each other wholesale, and especially their Christian brethren, why should the Jews, for whom they confess no love, be an exception?

It is quite true that Western statesmen, and even Soviet statesmen, are loudly proclaiming Israel's right to exist. But how can one take such pronouncements seriously if the conditions under which she is expected to live, as laid down by the very same statesmen, including yourself, are such that her existence, to say the least, would be precarious indeed. If, as demanded, Israel were to withdraw to, or very near, the 1967 lines she would be obliged to live with her armed forces constantly mobilised because the slightest delay in defensive dispositions might sound her death-knell. She would live under a constant strain and under a constant pressure to carry out, in the case of the slightest suspicion, a pre-emptive strike. This unavoidable and permanent state of alert would take such an excessive toll of her personal and material resources that not only would life be impossible, but it would be a sure recipe for a war engendered, if not by Arab plans for the 'second phase of the Palestinian struggle' (as openly admitted and planned by the PLO), then by mutual suspicion.

Here arises the problem of the safeguards and guarantees of a settlement. As far as I am concerned, I should like to be spared any Soviet guarantee, especially with their armed forces. And I do not care for Soviet-Arab-dominated UN guarantees either. Their value was demonstrated in 1967. I hope I am not being disrespectful if I also express my doubts as to US guarantees. Her reneging on the 1975 commitment to consult Israel about Palestinian Arab representation at the Geneva conference is a case in point. And would such a guarantee entail instant military intervention without prevarication in case of emergency or would such an emergency meet with futile exhortations as happened with the blocking of the Straits of Tiran in 1967? I cannot believe that the US, after Vietnam, would or could risk American lives for the sake of 'a small and far away country'. And even if you, Mr President, feel personally committed to such a guarantee, will the same be true of your successors? Sorry, but I have my very grave doubts. Is it reasonable under these circumstances to expect that a country should rest its security and chances of survival on such promises, even if seriously meant? I hope Israel will never do that.

In the above I do not seem to be concerned about the 'national rights of the Palestinians'. The reason for this is that in my opinion the concept of a distinct Palestinian nationhood is artificial, mischievous and of recent date. The central issue of Arab-Israel conflict has always been that the Arabs, obsessed by pan Arab-pan Islam ideology, consider the Jews a foreign body in their 'Lebensraum'. Until 1967 they openly proclaimed their desire to throw the Jews into the sea. However, since this David and Goliath relationship had alienated the civilised West, they mischievously adopted and developed the line that the Palestinians were nationally deprived and this in spite of the fact that a Palestinian Arab state already exists, i.e. Jordan — which constitutes 78% of what was mandatory Palestine and over 80% of whose population is Palestinian. An authoritative confirmation of the true nature of this line has been provided by Zuhair Mohsin, a member of the PLO Executive Committee:

> 'There are no differences between Jordanians, Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese . . . We are one people. Only for political reasons do we carefully underline our Palestinian identity . . . The existence of a separate Palestinian identity is there only for tactical reasons. The establishment of a Palestinian state is a new expedient to continue the fight against Zionism and for Arab unity'. (James Dorsey quoting Mohsin in the Dutch daily, *Trouw*, 31 March 1977.)

The mischievous character of the desire for this homeland also explains why no wish was expressed to establish a homeland in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip between 1949 and 1967 when these were in Arab hands, but 'passionately' flared up after Israel took these areas in 1967. On and off, watertap fashion nationalism.

However little I believe in the genuineness of a distinct Palestinian Arab nationhood, I believe even less in the genuineness of the international heartache for the national plight of the Palestinian. Is, Mr President, the national plight of the Kurds or the Armenians less pressing? Neither the Kurds nor the Armenians have 20 sister-countries with the same language, religion, cultural heritage and way of life as is the case with the Palestinians — not to mention the fact that, as I have already stated, one of these sister-countries, Jordan, is a Palestinian Arab country. Still, the whole pool of international crocodile tears in this area is reserved for the Palestinians.

It is more than obvious to me that this concern is sheer expediency. To disguise expediency as justice is hypocrisy. This hypocrisy has now gone so far as to threaten to turn the proposed Geneva conference into a new Munich with the role of the Sudeten Germans (who were also described as 'nationally deprived') allotted to the Palestinian Arabs and that of the Czechs to the Israelis.

Mr President, being deeply attached to your avowed principles of open government and morality which are incompatible with hypocrisy, and not being prepared to renounce our right to live, I refuse to accept the role allotted to me.

Yours sincerely,
(Dr) Paul Lax

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Malcolme Hulke

Keep MoT off the Road

Since vehicle testing started in 1961 the general unroadworthiness of cars has increased by 600 per cent. Twenty years ago the Automobile Association was called out to one in twelve of its members. Today one in two members need roadside help. The AA put it down to MoT complacency.

No one seems to know why we started the compulsory tests. It began with three checkpoints for ten-year-old bangers and has since escalated to 31 checkpoints for three-year-olds. This year's crop of legislation has made a bonanza for the motor trade. More delights are promised for 1979.

No figures exist for accidents caused through vehicle failure prior to 1961. However, between 1970 and 1974, nine years after the MoT had started, the Transport and Road Research Laboratory carried out on-the-spot investigations into 2,130 accidents within a 20 mile radius of its Berkshire headquarters. With a comparatively skimpy MoT in force then, one might have imagined large numbers of decrepit cars falling to pieces in the paths of other cars, largely contributing to the carnage on Berkshire's highways. But not so. The Laboratory found that vehicle defects alone caused 2½ per cent of the accidents, vehicle defects plus other factors caused 8 per cent, bad road environment (blind turnings and the like) caused 28 per cent, while road users were the sole factor in 65 per cent of the incidents, and were solely or partly to blame in 95 per cent. Of 632 'impaired' drivers at fault, 463 were drunk, 159 tired, 87 drugged, 33 ill, and 26 unhappy. Of the six 'impaired' pedestrians at fault, four were drunk and two ill. 'Non-impaired' road users were careless, looked but failed to see, did not look, etc, etc.

After that one might have expected massive road user re-education. Somewhat belatedly the Green-X campaign has saved lives, particularly children's. *Clunk-click* has saved a lot of motorists, but not anyone else. To be fair, over the entire MoT period road deaths have tumbled from 5.6 per 100 million vehicle kilometres in 1960 to 2.6 in 1976. But this improvement is attributed to motorways, seat belts and general road improvements.

With this massive reduction in accidents, and with no new figures to prove an increase caused by defective vehicles, one wonders why the DoT has seen fit to tighten the thumbscrew on an already impoverished motoring public. Perhaps bureaucrats must justify themselves; any seemingly worthy innovation that costs the Exchequer absolutely nothing can't be all bad. Or, put more directly by Jim of Wandsworth when I was on an LBC phone-in, 'It's a fiddle. It costs them nothing and it's bleeding us white. They want to make us buy new cars to help (obscenity button) British Leyland.'

At a time of fighting inflation it is quaint that the DoT has increased the test fee from £2.50 to £4.10. Even quainter is how the new fee was computed. The AA asked to be consulted. It was consulted – after the fee had been finalised. The DoT explained the £4.10 fee is based on 44.2 tester minutes at £5.37 per man hour, plus 14p administration. The AA then conducted the new, tough test themselves. They found it could be done in 20 man-minutes at a cost of £2.82. The DoT has not commented on the discrepant £1.28.

It is not so much the increased fee that causes resentment. What hurts and angers is the opportunity given to garages to make a quick quid by finding fault. As *Car Mechanics* (October 1977) reported:

> It was either pure stupidity, or bloody-mindedness – or was it a straightforward con? It was the case of a car failed on its MoT because, would you believe it, there was a knot in the free end of the passenger's safety harness!

Most testing is done at privately-run garages. As judge and jury they 'help' their clients' cars get through the test by fixing everything in sight, particularly anything that gives them a quick profit. Some will put things right that are not even wrong, such as changing yellow headlights to white in order to conform to regulations they have dreamed up. One garage proprietor faults rusted door panels, '. . . in case a lady catches her skirt walking by when the car is parked'. (The price of a new door today, with hanging and spraying, could be £150). My car was failed for a cracked flasher lens, despite the police having no objection to it. (One police spokesman insisted that flashers have no legal standing anyway, cracked or otherwise, only hand signals being acceptable in court.) Both wipers are listed for inspection, though in law the passenger wiper is not necessarily a requirement. Every caller on the LBC phone-in had complaints of nit-picking test station rip-offs. Not one person knew they could appeal.

To appeal you get a form VT17 from the test station and send it to the DoT with a fee of £4.10 (£2.50 for motorcycles). An inspector will call. If he upholds the garage you may end up paying double. You also stand the chance that your friendly neighbourhood garage will never accept your custom again, awkward if it is the only place within miles selling petrol. To have time to appeal you must book the test some days before the expiration of your current certificate. A garage trick is to inquire when your present certificate ends, then not be able to fit you into their busy schedule until that day.

Some local councils run testing stations. You cannot be robbed, but if anything is wrong you must go away, get it fixed and return; and even though you return within 30 seconds, the entire car must be tested again for another £4.10.

Not surprisingly a disenchanted motoring public is turning to crime. In happier days the cost of an 'easy' test was usually £5, double the old fee. Now, thanks to public demand and a lively black-market competitive spirit, the going rate has fallen to the new face value, £4.10.

The official policy of the AA is for the abolition of the MoT, not surprising from an organisation that has regularly opposed most road legislation. Yet is it possible this time they are right? What *does* account for the massive increase in car unroadworthiness? Is it that once a motorist has received that treasured pass certificate from Big Brother, he feels assured of mechanical perfection for a whole year? Apart from being ripped off and driven to delinquency, are we also so cocooned by protective regulations that we no longer hear the thump-thump of our shattering big ends, are deaf to the decibels of our own burst silencer, and oblivious to our failing brakes?

Anyway, all this to crack that bogey 2½-8 per cent. Meanwhile, what about the drunk, tired, high, sick, sad drivers who together with the careless, thoughtless, non-reactive and downright aggressive were solely responsible for 65 per cent of accidents and partly to blame for 95 per cent?

In 1963 Dr Terence Willett surveyed 653 motoring defendants. One-fifth had criminal records, twice the national average, and 151 shared convictions for 549 past motoring offences plus 610 other crimes. Has any notice been taken of that survey? Thirty years earlier the Paris bus service initiated psychological tests for its drivers and cut its accident rate by 60 per cent. In East London, Canada, a survey of taxi drivers showed that those from stable happy homes rarely had accidents, while those from broken homes were very accident prone. The Detroit police found that 52 per cent of *their* traffic violators were subnormal or

Roger Woddis

A Loyal Tribute

In sympathy with the Poet Laureate

Happy tidings from St Mary's!
Let the joyous churchbells ring!
Blessings be on Baby Phillips,
Wonder of the Lindo Wing!

Bursting hearts and glowing faces,
Guns saluting by the Tower,
From the nettle of recession
Britain plucks this precious flower!

Office-girls forget their coffee,
Lovers in St James's Park
Intertwine their freezing fingers,
Dreaming they are Anne and Mark.

Now the honey-coloured features
Overflow on page and screen,
Special souvenir editions,
Pictures of our radiant Queen.

Baby clothes and knitted bootees
Pour in through the Palace gates,
Hoisted flags and hoisted elbows
As the nation celebrates.

Humble home and Wiltshire farmhouse –
Gosh! I've gone on long enough;
Spare a thought for one whose duty
Is to write this awful stuff!

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mentally defective. Personality traits are not the only problems. According to *Drive* (September-October 1977) Britain has the lowest driver vision requirements outside the Third World. Where else can you hold a current driving licence *and* be on the list of registered blind? Only in Britain.

Instead of giving garages a licence to print money, might the DoT pay a little more attention to the one component that seems to cause 65-95 per cent of the trouble – the driver behind the wheel?

Tim Albert

Newham's Favourite Son

The North London Labour fiefdom of Newham has become the scene for an educational battle which makes the Prentice affair seem but a brief and gentle encounter. It concerns first, the question of academic freedom, and secondly the whole question of the governance and integrity of polytechnics, and arises from the efforts made by a Mr Surash Vyas to secure a place for himself on a social work training course at the North East London Polytechnic.

Those running the course – which is a two-year period leading to a certificate of qualification in social work validated by the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work – say that Mr Vyas is not good enough. Those running the polytechnic (who happen to be the same local authority which employs Mr Vyas) say that of course he is good enough, and their efforts to have their way have caused the issue to drag on for three years, leaving in their track strikes, threatened dismissals, and the effective destruction of what seems to have been a good – and badly needed – course.

The issue centres around academic freedom. Mr Vyas tends to see this in terms of his right to get on to the course of his choice. 'Do you think they have the right to treat me like this?' he asks, referring to the social-work tutors. 'They have destroyed my career. By now I could have been somewhere high up.' His main supporter, Arthur Edwards, Newham alderman, science organiser (adviser) with the nearby Redbridge council, and chairman of the NELP governors, sees it in terms of the local authority's duty to fight whatever it perceives as discrimination. 'Are the authorities in control, or a small handful of International Socialists?' he asks. The social work tutors, CCETSW, and many other ordinary mortals, see the issue simply as whether those running and validating a course in higher education should be allowed to determine selection, or whether they should be overruled for political considerations.

Mr Vyas, now 24, is an East African Asian who has some 'O' levels, an ONC in public administration and an 'A' level in British constitution. Being keen to study, and set on doing well in his career, he applied to NELP, his local polytechnic, for the social work course starting in the autumn of 1975. That year there were 500 applicants for 40 places; 200 were called to interview and Mr Vyas, whose form had been seen by two tutors, was not one of those 200.

Which would probably have been the end of the matter, had not Mr Vyas's employers, Newham Council, been one of the three local authorities running the polytechnic, and had not Mr Vyas, an extremely determined young man, written off to his director of education pointing out the need to train education welfare officers, and noting that there was indeed a suitable course being run locally. Some months later, quite unexpectedly, the course tutors were informed that Newham education department had made extra funds available so that they could second somebody on to the course, and the NELP director, Dr George Brosan, instructed them to comply. The first candidate was not Mr Vyas, but a girl colleague, and she was told by the tutors that, in effect, she was queue jumping. She withdrew (but not, as some say, in tears) though she subsequently applied through the normal channels and is now on the course.

But next on the list was Mr Vyas, who apparently did not share her scruples, and after a blazing internal row he was personally registered on the course by Dr Brosan. The course tutors refused to teach him. The unions were called in to mediate and eventually Mr Vyas withdrew (or was withdrawn?) on the grounds that by now the course had started.

Which again should have been the end of the matter. But during the following year, instead of applying for other courses (a thing that he says he has never done) and whether or not he was encouraged by person or persons unknown (presumably for reasons of political machismo) Mr Vyas applied again. This time he was more experienced, and was called for an interview. He was seen first by a field-work tutor from a nearby borough, who was then joined by an assistant director of social services and the senior course tutor (the only one of three who knew of Mr Vyas's history). In spite of excellent references from Mr Vyas's department (though senior staff agree that excellent references from departments wishing to second staff are hardly a rarity . . .) they unanimously decided *not* to award him one of the 40 places, nor to put him along with the other 67 on the waiting list.

An extraordinary succession of events then followed. When it became known that Mr Vyas had not been accepted, the head of the department had his powers withdrawn (a ruling which meant effectively that he couldn't sign his letters – he later resigned and within days of leaving his post dropped dead from a heart attack). At the instigation of our Newham Alderman Arthur Edwards, the chairman of the NELP governors, Newham Council passed a resolution saying it would not pass the NELP estimates. Hurried consultations then took place, at which it was agreed that the course intake would be increased by five, to give priority to any employees of the three controlling boroughs who were on the waiting list. The claims of Mr Vyas were, wisely, not pressed, and the matter quietly passed out of its second year.

But that wasn't the end of the matter either. For the third year running Mr Vyas decided to apply. He was interviewed in a similar way to before, and again judged, unanimously, not suitable for the course (even though, technically, had he been selected there would have been an automatic place waiting for him). There followed another extraordinarily heavy-handed reaction: in July the joint education committee of the three boroughs running the polytechnic said that, unless their employee was admitted, they would stop the course and dismiss the staff.

Midsummer madness seems to have taken over. The NELP directorate overruled the wishes of the course tutors and offered a place to Mr Vyas. Alderman Edwards outlined his threats personally to the tutors. Students were then informed that their course might not start after all, and they took the polytechnic to the High Court. A judge in Chambers got an assurance from NELP that the course would go ahead. The tutors, thinking they had won a wonderful victory, saw to their surprise that Mr Vyas turned up to be registered, with the full support of Edwards and the directorate. Again they refused to teach him. The deadlock will only be resolved when the directorate agree they will make arrangements to teach Mr Vyas separately – which was how things stood until this Tuesday when, after keeping his head down in his office for four weeks, Mr Vyas turned up for a lecture. The rest of the class immediately rose to their feet and walked out and the student body started talking of further action such as picketing lectures. On the same day CCETSW announced they would suspend the course.

But what has gone wrong? The main trouble seems to have been in the institutional organisation of the polytechnics which has failed to ensure that there were sufficient checks and balances to guarantee the freedom and integrity of academic staff. Put another way, Newham council played an astonishing number of roles – employer, selector, referee, final arbiter and paymaster-general – and it is hardly surprising that the whole thing got out of hand. Why was it, for example, that there was nobody in a sufficiently neutral position to be able to tell Mr Vyas that it was time he applied somewhere else, or pointed out to Alderman Edwards that his crusade, however well intentioned, was doing more harm than good? The whole affair is something that the Oakes Committee, currently looking into the way of governing institutions of higher education would do well to consider, since it shows clearly what can happen when academic decisions are taken not openly by academics but by the politicians in their 'smoke-filled' rooms? One trusts that the law courts will take a similar view.

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C. H. Rolph

The Eye of Greece

If Greece can't rebuild an Acropolis, can she rebuild her democracy? Election day is next Sunday, 20 November. Election apathy is rampant. Election fever infects only the loudspeakers, whose distorted bellowing goes on all day until after midnight, and the small groups (mainly Communist or National Front) who are installing their own apparatus to jam each other and, in the process, to get nothing through to the public eardrum. The latest form of Western democracy reared its head when 30 masked men, wearing dark glasses, black gloves and boots, and carrying iron bars, clubs and chains, burst into the Athens Medical School at Goudi, assaulted a number of students, burned posters which bore the wrong slogans, and smashed doors and windows. They were wearing the badge of the National Front Youth Organisation, which seems even nastier than ours and is openly Nazi. The New National Democratic Party, the Greek Communist Party, the National Front and the Union of the Democratic Centre, whose disdain for each other is equalled only by their abuse of the conservative Karamanlis administration, all set up howling stations opposite each other in the same streets and compress the air with what sounds like a stentorian tape of the 1938 Hitler played backwards.

The citizens seem utterly impervious. The whole thing is frightening, totalitarian, menacing, and they are not frightened. I do not know any Greek; and to the visiting oaf, every word looks and sounds like a mixture of Aktiebolaget and Baghdad, so that you could be anywhere between Scandinavia and Iran; but church bells and plainsong, amplified to the point of torture, are for some reason competing at the same time; motor-cycles (always with an open exhaust) are roaring up and down: motorists take their hands off the horn-button only to change gear; four-engined jets roar overhead to and from all parts of the world. The women, unmoved by all this, wearing several layers of wool in a temperature of 75° Fahrenheit, hurry about with their arms folded (why?), and the men stroll, hurry, loiter, drink and argue in a way that shows them to be, in spite of all, happy. About what?

Well, they may not look it but they seem well off. They do a lot of dining out with their whole families, expensively by any standards I have known. They claim to have little unemployment. They still regard their country as agricultural (olive oil, wine, currants, tobacco, sheep and goats) but they say, in effect, 'You wait'. They tend to belittle tourism as a source of national income, in which they must surely be wrong – even in November the tourists at Sounion, oozing from 50 huge motor coaches and scrambling up the hillside to the Temple of Poseidon, looked from a distance like [illegible] sunset [illegible]

added bauxite to their celebrated iron, manganese and lead, and justly proud of their marble. But if they are as happy as their laughter suggests, one can but be happy with them; for their history, both classical and recent, is tragic almost beyond compare and the archaeological splendours they are now sharing with the world are survivors from unending wars of senseless extermination and plunder. Perhaps the Greeks, ready now to accept parliamentary democracy as something better than the Turks and the Colonels, are steeling themselves to endure for the time being its worst features carried to excess: street corners are ankle deep in leaflets – these are a little more thinly spread along every main street and under all the café tables; poster-sized photographs of all the candidates, sometimes a dozen identical ones in a row, cover every available wall, building, shopfront, bridge and vehicle. If no one ever reads the leaflets it is because they say no more than Vote for Mavros, or Papandreou, or Stephanopoulos, or Mitsotakis; while the smiling majority seems certain to vote instead for the reigning Mr Karamanlis, getting into the Common Market, staying in Nato, and fostering free enterprise.

The Chief of Police in Athens has been asked by Mr Misailidis, General Director of the New Democratic Party, to enforce the laws about electoral behaviour. The turmoil going on is a disgrace to Athens, he says. In particular he wants the National Front Party office moved (with its loudspeaker) from exactly opposite the NDP offices in Academies Street. The police are arresting girl students for selling in the streets the extreme left daily *Rizopastis* without having a newsvendor's licence (this country has no such dangerous thing); the Greek Communist Party calls this 'police terrorism', alleging also that the police stand by and watch anti-communist acts of violence. Others want to know why the police do nothing about the huge hammer-and-sickle emblems sprayed by aerosol on public walls and buildings, and the equally numerous incitement against the blacks. Because I rather wanted to know what the police thought about street noise and litter and unlighted vehicles after dark, I decided to try and see the Chief of Police myself. It might have been easier to see the President of Greece.

At police headquarters no one seemed to know what my NUJ card was, but it is fair to add that, as a dozen anxious-looking policemen passed it from one to another for inspection, they were having to examine it by candle-light: the catastrophic storm and floods of the previous day (2 November) besides drowning 30 people had doused all the lighting. It had also stopped the lifts, and when at last it had been decided (thanks to an earnest young policeman who spoke English) that I could be [illegible] to the next hurdle, I climbed the stairs to the sixth floor with the policewoman and a large and panting policeman. There was a lot more scrutiny to be endured before I could get in to the Chief of Police, but when I did he was affability itself and seemed to have been sitting there longing for me.

He said the electoral laws had to be enforced impartially, though he liked to say observed rather than enforced. This shouting and voting was all rather new. Noisy motor-cars? He seemed genuinely surprised. No one complained, he said. The boys on their motor-cycles were noisy, but they could be doing worse things. Did no one mind them practising rodeo tricks on the pathways between street-café chairs? He hadn't heard of that, and I have a feeling that my girl interpreter hadn't either. What did he think of Athens motorists generally? Dangerous implication that they are worse than British (which they are). They have to pass a severe test, he said, and there are many failures; preliminary driving lessons are compulsory, and the minimum age is 18. Why do so many of them drive without lights? Oh, it's illegal of course, but the insurance companies rather look after that.

As everywhere, the most frequent crime is theft, but (to my astonishment) 'bilking' the outdoor cafés is almost unknown. A couple of waiters can have 300 or 400 chairs to watch, half of them perhaps on the other side of a road carrying six lines of traffic. Nothing could be easier than to slip away without paying, but the Greeks – and the tourists – simply don't do it. Marvellous. Greece has the death penalty for murder, and may have two or three executions in a year and then a period of five years without one. There is a minimum murder penalty of five years' imprisonment, regardless of problems like 'mercy killing'. The Greeks seemed to have no word for vandalism, which is nice, if historically puzzling. But they do have soccer, and its devotees do not maim each other or smash property. There are no licensing hours for drinkers, but a child under 15 is not allowed in a bar. And there is little drunkenness (I saw none.)

Finally, I wanted to know what happened to an accused person between arrest and trial: could he get bail? This was not understood at all. Finally: 'It is a matter for the courts,' the girl told me. But supposing in a difficult case there are six preliminary hearings? What happens to the defendant during all that time? More discussion. 'There are not six hearings,' she said. I thought I saw the Chief steal a look at his wristwatch. After all, he had seen me without appointment. I concluded that you don't get bail in Greece, stood up, and asked that he be thanked for giving me so much time. He said it was I who had given the time and that it had all been very nice. As we shook hands we clicked our heels and bowed, but afterwards I thought he would have been content with the handshaking. I realised on the way down the pitch-dark stairs that I was still a long way short of Sir Henry Maine, the great English legal jurist, who held that 'except the blind forces of nature, nothing moves in this world that is not Greek in origin'.

Athens

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London Diary

☐ So apparently it's Callaghan week. Almost every enemy of the Labour Party has been praising his sapience and solidarity in face of the trade unions, rather as they hymned Harold Wilson during the dear dead days of *In Place of Strife* (where it was Jim who plied the Judas blade). I still don't see any reason to lay off the bet on a Tory victory next time – except that one doesn't want to win money on such a contingency. Through all the wiseacre talk about things getting better under Labour, and thus somehow rewarding the party in power, I can hear the old argument that when things get better you put in the Tories and have a bit of a spree. The 1951 trump can be played again; the servants can tidy up the desecrated drawing-room just in time for the next whoopee to commence. There is only one real chance. I hear that Argentina is not as well-prepared with World Cup facilities as it might be. The British authorities can still bid to be hosts, which carries the right to certain participation. If it can be staged here next year, then probably the lucky government can call the shots electorally. Where this leaves the commanding heights I'm sure I don't know.

☐ Opinions are, apparently, divided over the Israeli blitz of Southern Lebanon. They seem to be divided more passionately in London over the lesser matter of Menachem Begin's now doubtful state visit. The timing was hoped, by Jerusalem at any rate, to coincide with the anniversary of the Balfour declaration, but this hasn't proved possible. I shall scan the reception lists eagerly to see if one particular member of this government attends any of the glad-handing. Just over five years ago, Gerald Kaufman wrote about Begin in the NS that:

> A fascist is no less a fascist for being a Jewish fascist . . . toleration of such fascism, under whatever specious pretext it devises for itself, would irremediably sully the Jewish identity. Seven general elections results prove that the sensible Israelis do not need to learn this lesson.

I wouldn't follow Kaufman's logic (on this or anything else) to conclude that the eighth general election has made Israel a fascist state. But it is slightly amazing to see how easily the old line about Israel being a socialist oasis has been discarded.

☐ The other night at a dinner party I had a futile and bitter argument with a Tory about not wearing an armistice poppy. He suggested, not too subtly, that I was sympathetic to Prussian militarism. No white feather was to hand. Thinking afterwards about the revulsion from poppy-flashing, I knew, obviously, that it wasn't any reluctance to honour the dead. But something about Remembrance turns me off. I think it's the phrase 'glorious dead', coupled with the dominance, on the ceremonial days concerned, of the very people (generals, bishops, crowned heads and other well-born rabble) who thought the 1914 charnel-house splendid *at the time*. And, of course, did no fighting themselves. The idea of an Earl Haig fund seems to crown the incongruity. But must the militarists always have the best tunes?

☐ Whose idea was it to let Lord Carver out on his own in Salisbury? It may be all very well to appoint a bemedalled bloke to a ticklish job in order to shut up the Tories (who have some ancestral objection to criticising serving officers). But until things shape up better he really ought to stay in the map-room. Time spent on reconnaisance, as I think Brigadier Ritchie-Hook used to say, is *never* wasted. The General does seem to have, in any case, a rather odd conception of the soldier's art. Writing in the *Sunday Telegraph*, he alludes to his peace-keeping days in Cyprus (thanks a lot, by the way, for that last triumph) and says how splendidly the forces performed, during the Turkish invasion, in getting their own wives and families out. The Cyprus government, actually, let British troops stay in Cyprus under a treaty which guaranteed their small republic against aggression. The treaty was hastily torn up. No poppies for Cyprus. I'm known as a bore on this subject, but I just thought I'd mention it.

☐ Having looked at Andrew Roth's *Sir Harold Wilson: Yorkshire Walter Mitty*, I'm not surprised that the subject decided to instruct his trusty solicitors. But, really, why does he bother? He must have realised by now that, Roth or no Roth, his reputation in history is secure.

☐ The Communist Party has had rather a good press for its 35th Congress, at which it made a formal commitment to political pluralism. Having attended some of the sessions, I have a few questions for any delegates who may read this. (They all seemed decent and serious people.) One. How do you expect to carry conviction on your programme if the very next thing you do is to give a thunderous ovation to the fraternal delegate from Kazakhstan? Two. Who put that pile of pamphlets by Josef Stalin on the bookstall? Three. What is to be done about the delegate who said wheedlingly that it was all right to have more than one party under socialism because after all the East Germans did?

☐ Why does the Left seem to be sitting out the closed shop debate? A letter from Sidney Weighell in the *Daily Mail* (now itself almost a NAFF house magazine) argues that the closed shop on the railways is a great insurance against unofficial strikes. I can remember reading a denunciation in a Marxist weekly, some eight years ago, of the deal between a chemical firm and a craft union whereby a man who lost his card lost his job. The argument on the subject in the Tory Party is clearly between those who see the system as a means of paternal labour discipline and those who see it as a chance for an all-out anti-union rave-up. The language of freedom can be perverted to suit either taste. When the Pilkington workers rebelled against a diehard management and a sweetheart union in 1971 it was the old General and Municipal Workers who did the real hatchet stuff and policed the workforce by stripping the unofficial leaders of their jobs, their cards and also, thereby, their Labour Party membership. I remember socialists standing up for the rights of the men. But of course this was militancy, so we had to get along without the 'freedom riders' that time.

☐ Talking about militancy – and who isn't these days? – Joe Rogaly's rapid-fire book on Grunwick (Penguin Special 80p) is a fine effort. Anybody who reads him in the *Financial Times* will know that Rogaly finds capitalism in general deserving of the 'best buy' award. To that extent, his account of the strikers' case is more than ordinarily fair, and puts the general run of labour reporting to shame. I was amused to see that the NAFF paper *Free Nation* found space (opposite a lengthy apologia for Vorster) to review the book as if it favoured the George Ward case in outline. They still found it hard to get over his view that 'because of its own shortsightedness, the NAFF is in itself a threat to freedom'. The person who comes best out of the whole account is Mrs Desai, leader of the strike committee. Here is an exchange which convinces you that there will always be an England.

> Lord Scarman: What you are saying is that if you have someone to speak for you and someone on your side who is independent then you have a greater sense of security?
> Mrs Desai: Yes, and that is what we want.
> Lord Scarman: It might interest you to know, Mrs Desai, that is the origin of the legal profession.

It would have been superfluous, but even more charming, if he had added that it enforced a closed shop.

Christopher Hitchens

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Any woman who turns her back on the smouldering, sexy Clint Eastwood to go off into the night, must have good reason. And 23-year-old Judith Bullock, of 87 Park Avenue, Ashbourne, had the best reason in the world, leaving the celluloid hero to his unavoidable fate mid-way through the film *Beguiled*, to keep her own appointment. It was at 11.0 p.m. on Monday, August 22 as Judy sat watching the 'Adults Only' late night film, that the Nottingham City Hospital rang to say: 'We have a kidney for you.' – *Ashbourne News Telegraph* (Andrew Darling)

☐ Judge George MacDonald said: 'Although observations about liberty of the subject and so on are interesting and no doubt would be listened to with respect and possibly sympathy in the Houses of Parliament, they play no place in the Southampton Criminal court in this trial.' – *Western Daily Press* (E. G. Morgan Fletcher)

☐ The middle classes have reacted to the new freedom – to the emphasis on individual exploration and satisfaction – by getting divorced; and divorced in large and increasing numbers. From about 1960 on, more and more schools saw they had a role providing a stable and secure background for boys and girls from broken homes. It is an example of how subtle and instant is the public schools' response to any basic need in their market. – *Observer* (Reg Luddington)

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University Forum

Stephen Atkinson*

How To Be President

Another academic year has begun, and with it the spectre of yet more student union elections. Now, don't misunderstand me. I'm all for democracy, but in my hall of learning, the University of Bradford, we have elections for anything and everything. The most important one is obviously the union presidency. The various campaigns would give a sociologist a field day, surpassing anything the Mafia could concoct in the way of deception and intimidation.

At the Freshers' conference a prospective presidential candidate might say the following: 'I myself am a committed supporter of the Workers Revolutionary Party/ Socialist Workers Party/Labour Party/ Liberal Party/ Conservative Party/National Association For Freedom/National Front/ The Extremely Silly and Misled Party for the Restoration of King Zog of Albania (Marxist-Leninist) – whatever that crazy Trot/Tory thug/Liberal wet following me might say.'

After two hours of this you, the aspiring politician, should be convinced that union politicians are (a) mad, (b) careerists, (c) mental cripples and (d) that you could do a better job. It is (d) that sets you on the downhill road to self-degradation and possession of the all-powerful union Executive card.

PROBLEM 1: HOW TO GET THERE

Unfortunately some fool decided that the University of Bradford Union should be a representative democracy. In accordance with this archaic and totally erroneous principle of equality for all – even students – a candidate is obliged to stand for election under a fiendishly complex voting system and convince the people by explaining policies, by bribery or even by nailing heads to skirting boards that he or she is fit for the job.

PROBLEM 2: HOW TO GET THERE AND RETAIN FRIENDS

This is very difficult indeed. The candidate must realise that eventually his circle of friends may just consist of hacks, ex-hacks, hacks' girlfriends, hacks' spouses, not forgetting the sabbatical member of the Executive in whose house the aspiring politico just happens to live. Defeat in one's first election must not be taken too seriously. This is merely a temporary setback, although I can remember a certain young Bradford hack who could only gain a place on the executive by being elected unopposed (after his ignominious defeat at the hands of a world-famous joke candidate: His Excellency Al-Hadji President-for-life Field Marshal Idi Amin Dada, VC, DSO, Ph.D), The candidate may know that he/she has the oratorial prowess of Adolf Hitler and the political honesty of Richard Nixon but these good points are not enough. Elections in the University of Bradford Union are not won on policies or politics. Everything depends on how many people the candidate knows. Therefore, one must cultivate friends and draw attention to oneself.

PROBLEM 3: HOW TO GET ON TO THE EXECUTIVE

Assuming that the candidate is 'well-in' with the various internal committees that a students' union seems to enjoy spawning, he or she must regularly attend Union council meetings and make fatuous speeches on trivial issues. General Meetings must provide the aspiring union supremo with a forum for making himself known: he or she must occasionally rabble-rouse, taking firm stands on torture in Iran, apartheid in South Africa and the latest 1p. increase in the price of a pint. Naturally the last issue is the most important.

PROBLEM 4: HOW TO CONTRADICT ONESELF ALL THE TIME AND STILL GET ELECTED

This often happens. Some candidates are stupid enough to say what political grouping they can be identified with. This is definitely not recommended. A candidate must hide his or her true politics until it is impossible for opponents to act. It does not really matter if certain embarrassing *faux pas* are dragged up from the murky depths of one's political past, such as when, in the week the candidate was a card-carrying member of the International League of Anarcho-Cretins, he spoke for the napalming of Ireland and for the introduction of the garotte to execute under-18s found drinking in the Union bars. The candidate must be wary of giving himself the labels 'progressive', 'centrist', 'progressive centrist', 'moderate', 'progressive moderate', 'self-styled liberal', and to call oneself an 'independent socialist' is to invite trouble from both Left and Right. The label 'independent' will usually suffice, leaving both supporters and opponents baffled enough to give the candidate time to dig up some smutty details from his opponent's private life.

'Your new cover, Hoskins, will be that of a harmless, redundant ex-spy'

PROBLEM 5: HOW TO USE PEOPLE, BE SENSATIONAL AND STORMTROOP ONE'S WAY TO VICTORY

Anyone standing for an executive post must be prepared to walk over their grandmothers to get into office (candidates may use their own grandmothers or hire them at a ridiculously low price from the union treasurer). If there are no grandmothers available, the candidate will have to resort to walking over the Student Body, and that is quite easy to do at a Union General Meeting. An Executive candidate must be scurrilous but above all sensational. One way of doing this is to propose controversial motions such as offering the National Front a tax-free gift of £50,000. The next move is to import a solid core of friends or supporters – the two need not be synonymous – to heckle and shout down the opposition as quickly as possible. Fortunately Bradford has been spared this in recent years.

PROBLEM 6: HOW TO WRITE A PEN-PORTRAIT OF ONESELF

This is fun. Let us take a candidate at random. Our boy for President of the Union is, shall we say, Orinoco Womble (Thuggery Technology III). Take it away Orinoco: 'A local lad, Orinoco has been active in the Union since he arrived here in 1973 after taking a year off after A-Levels. His forthright and sometimes abrupt manner has not endeared him to many in the Union hierarchy but after early confrontations we feel he has matured sufficiently to be able to cope with the many problems next year's President will face. Previous terms on the executive as Academic Secretary and Welfare Secretary – though fraught with difficulties – have shown him to be capable in the delicate field of student welfare. This, coupled with his obvious drive, the desire to make the presidency what it should be – namely, a position of leadership – and an alert mind should be the ideal combination for a student union president. We ask you to consider him when you vote.'

Most students will have read this kind of rubbish before. What that pen portrait really means is: 'After being rejected by Leeds University, he served seven months in HM Prison Wakefield for beating up a 72-year-old retired funeral director in a Huddersfield pub. Although originally sentenced to 15 months, he was given full remission for informing on 43 attempted breakouts. He was never popular at Wakefield. On his release our candidate was forced to change his name from Johann Steinhaus to the more pedestrian Orinoco Womble to avoid persecution and escape publicity and was immediately snapped up by the newly-formed Undergraduate School of Thuggery Technology. Tolerates no dissent and, if given the chance, would gladly strike you down with the nearest blunt instrument. His knowledge of academic affairs and welfare is unsurpassed: he has resat the last two years and his girlfriend is three months pregnant. Has survived five attempts to no-confidence him on the grounds of 'anomalies' at voting time. When elected, he will maintain the president's job as it is: a springboard to an executive post in the NUS.'

Stephen Atkinson is reading Modern Languages at Bradford.

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Willingly to School

As a child, my mother, considered by her doting mid-Victorian parents to be far too precious to be risked in a rough boarding-school, was instead exposed in 'the schoolroom' at home to a succession of loveless and needy governesses (in 1850 there were 40,000 of them in circulation) who, for £20 a year, taught her all they knew, before packing up those depressing wickerwork trunks and glooming off elsewhere. 'All they knew' seemed to consist of the capes and bays of Scotland, which had to be learnt parrot-fashion, and Canada's exports and imports, ditto. My mother was by nature cheerful and out-going and longed for wider spheres but a request to be allowed to attend a local day school was received with horror and turned instantly down, my grandmother doubtless sniffing smelling salts to help her to recover from the shock. Even when, greatly daring, my mother was occasionally able to get permission to play afternoon tennis at a friend's house, she was for days merrily referred to as 'Miss Gadabout'.

This educational non-event was the lot of many girls in reasonably affluent families, and indeed the alternative did have a certain element of risk in it. These were the popular Ladies' Academies, a sort of juvenile finishing school of which in 1836 there were over a hundred on the Sussex coast alone. Though some of them cost more than Eton, they had in general spartan living conditions, poor food and lax discipline. Here the girls, moulded into an acceptable shape by steel corsets and held in place by various braces and clamps and contraptions to aid deportment, were taught 'the accomplishments'. They sewed. They painted. They thumped the piano, scraped the fiddle and twanged the harp. Kilted buffers taught them Scottish reels, and pomaded frogs the gavotte. Sleek Spaniards, breathing heavily, told them how to handle castanets, and who can say what else. Army sergeants even instructed them in 'marching', a method of forward motion to which the female form is totally unsuited (how conscientiously they marched, this way and that, in the war, and how fearfully ludicrous they looked, especially sideways on). And then suddenly, at fashionable Cheltenham, at modish, raffish Brighton and elsewhere, all was changed. Proper boarding-schools for girls, with high educational aims, sprang into exciting life and, with them and as though by a miracle, the Great Headmistresses that such places require.

I have written before of having, in the 1930s, visited various girls' schools, for literary purposes, and having come up against the alarming and commanding and relentless and unflappable figures who ran them. Here, and once more we are in debt to the superb delvings and researches of Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy reported in his *The Public School Phenomenon*, are some of their predecessors. There was Lydia Rous of the Mount School, a Quaker establishment of distinction, who terrified her staff to such an extent that an American visitor thought they must all be under some Trappist vow of silence. There was the tyrannical Kate Unwin of Walthamstow Hall who, coming upon a group of young teachers planning to have a cosy read of *Jane Eyre*, forbade them to look at it again until they were older (twenty-five). And then there was the famous Miss Lawrence whose family, in sore need of cash, started Roedean (motto: 'Honour Roedean'), a scholastic experience which was meted out to some of my married friends and of which they now speak with assorted emotions. 'In Brighton, all schools succeed,' Miss Lawrence's aunt announced on the school's move there from Wimbledon in 1889. How right she was. It proved, expensive from the start (£126 a year), a goldmine. Rapidly increasing numbers (how splendidly the Victorians *bred*) forced a move along the coast towards Rottingdean and many acres of land were purchased, upon which the girls, as firmly disciplined and regimented as any in history's pages, struggled at hockey and cricket (one of the book's many delightful snaps shows an Eton-cropped wicket-keeper deftly at work behind the stumps, the last word in skilful dexterity). Miss Lawrence herself, painted by Orpen, looks like a masculine Queen Victoria. She had an extremely loud voice (the better to tick you off with, my dear), was president of the Lacrosse Association, weighed latterly 18 stone and always expected people to, of all things, admire her hats. Who dare say that Angela Brazil in any way exaggerated?

Above all, there was the formidable, dauntless Miss Beale (she learned to bicycle at 62) of 'Cheltenham College for Young Ladies', a stone building easily mistaken for a fortress and which allows not the merest peep in (or out) and which was founded in 1854. Miss Beale soon added on a kindergarten and a teacher training college, winding up in command of 900 girls. And up, like mushrooms, popped in due course other institutions – Wycombe Abbey, St. Paul's, Sherborne, Westonbirt. Miss Beale, who as a child dreamt of nothing but running schools was a dedicated fanatic. She used sometimes, to the confusion of her visitors, speak of Cheltenham as 'my husband'. It was no more than the truth, even if it caused anxious looks. Her influence lives on. Even today, 800 girls change classes in an awesome silence, swishing soundlessly up and down the passages as though Miss Beale herself were watching. In the 1950s there was, in mid-winter, a parade of girls before the headmistress. Girl after girl had, in turn, to raise her skirt and reveal that she was wearing the regulation green knickers, about which there had been some slackness. One can see Miss Beale nodding approval. What did it matter that it was customary for some of the girls to give each other masculine nick-names (Jacko, Bob, Charlie)? One girl even referred to the others as 'chaps'. Awkward emotions like these were soon swept away in the tidal-wave of work that engulfed the school.

Girls conform on the whole more readily than boys. History reveals few female rebellions and so how doubly shocking was a *Times* item of news in the summer which stated that 40 girls at a boarding school had been sent home a week early (hardly a punishment, one would have thought) for throwing the gym mistress into the swimming pool. Shades of dear Miss Brazil again.

SIR
HAROLD WILSON
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Letters to the Editor

The Legacy of Bolshevism

Sir, According to your editorial discussion of the Russian revolution 60 years ago and the Russian regime today (NS 11 November), one of the differences between them is that 'the Gulag system was built on the dead bones of the Bolshevik old guard'. On the contrary, the Gulag system was built *by* the Bolshevik old guard.

A few weeks after the Bolsheviks seized power, Lenin advocated among methods of suppressing opposition 'forced labour for all who disobey the present law' (December 1917) and 'punishment by forced labour of the hardest kind' for 'harmful vermin' (January 1918); a few months later, the Bolshevik government legalised forced labour sentences (July 1918) and forced labour camps (September 1918); at the end of the Civil War, Trotsky argued in his campaign for the militarisation of labour that 'deserters from labour' should be drafted into forced labour battalions or sentenced to forced labour camps (March 1920); one of the demands of the Kronstadt rebels was an investigation of the camps (March 1921); after the final victory of the Bolshevik regime, the first extermination camps were established in the far North during 1921. As the camp system grew, the Chief Administration of Places of Imprisonment (Gumzak), which already existed in 1917, went through several changes of name until it became the Chief Administration of Corrective Labour Camps (Gulag); in 1923 an official handbook listed 65 camps under its control.

However many 'revisionist historians' may have 'shown that Stalinism was a negation of October, not simply a continuation of it', there is no doubt that the Gulag system – like most features of Stalinism – existed before Stalin's accession and indeed before Lenin's death. And there was no reason for not knowing this at the time. As early as 1920 Bertrand Russell referred to the camps in his book *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism*. From 1921 the international anarchist movement exposed the nature of the camps on the basis of reports from inside them; from 1925 first-hand accounts of the camps by escaped prisoners began to appear in the West, and the books by Malsagov and Bezsonov were widely read. By the end of the 1920s, the camp population was over 100,000. Two things changed after 1929 – the size of the Gulag archipelago increased, and the victims included Communists. Those who created the camps died in them – and serve them right!

NICOLAS WALTER

134 Northumberland Road
Harrow, Middlesex

The Gould Report

Sir, My attention has been drawn to two letters you have published on the *The Attack on Higher Education*. One of your correspondents says (Letters 21 October) that I 'smeared' Heinemann the publishers: 'apparently they are giving aid and comfort to the enemy by advertising four books (none of which is left-wing) in the *New Left Review*.' The simplest glance at the Report will show how this distorts what I wrote. Heinemann was cited not for advertising in the *New Left Review* but for prefacing an advertisement with the words 'Heinemann congratulates *New Left Review* on its 100th issue'. It seemed to me – and to others – extremely broadminded of a capitalist enterprise like Heinemann to extend such congratulations.

Your second correspondent claims (Letters 4 November) that the 'very rights' of Marxist academics to *teach and vote* are certainly threatened by the implications of the Gould campaign'. (My italics.) Such implications exist only in your correspondent's head. There is no such grotesque threat – to the right to teach or vote – anywhere in the Report: nor was one even contemplated by any member of the study-group that prepared the Report. Why do your correspondents feel their credibility will be enhanced by these fairy-tales? And why do you do them the disservice of publishing them?

S. J. GOULD

University of Nottingham
University Park, Nottingham

Sir, I was so astonished – and dismayed – by the ill-tempered character of Richard Hoggart's reply (Letters 11 November) to Martin Shaw's letter (Letters 4 November) about the Gould report, that I went back and re-read both Hoggart's article on the report (NS 14 October) and Shaw's comments on the article. Hoggart does not reply to, or even comment on, a single one of the substantive points made by Shaw. Instead he virtually hands Shaw over to Gould as a fit object for his inquisitorial activities. This, together with Richard Hoggart's amazingly uncritical use of question-begging terms like 'extremism' (has Mr Hoggart himself never been the object of this convenient smear-term?) suggests that on one matter at least Martin Shaw is demonstrably right: 'the retreat of even the more committed liberals is already under way'.

ANTHONY ARBLASTER,
Chairman.

Council for Academic Freedom and Democracy
246 Crookesmoor Road
Sheffield

The Japanese Miracle

Sir, Bad luck for you and Murray Sayle that his two-page spread 'Japan's Miracle Turns Sour' (NS 4 November) appeared on the morning that other Tokyo correspondents reported Prime Minister Fukuda as stating 'we can no longer rely on exports to create demand' and that 'exports will serve as a negligible factor in expanding economic growth in future. The important thing is to create [domestic] demand in the midst of the problems of over-capacity and unemployment.' Sayle's prescription of massive public works expenditure had after all been widely anticipated in Japan and Fukuda's speech does rather knock the stuffing out of a lengthy diatribe.

Sayle's habit of inviting comparisons between the West and Japan in economic and non-economic fields is more of a minefield than he wants to admit. The Japanese diet contributes to higher life expectancy and lower infant mortality rates than in Britain. Japan's pollution standards are, belatedly, strict. British Leyland will have to obtain special dispensation from the Japanese Government before it can market its cars as they fail Japanese exhaust emission tests. No article from Tokyo to Britain would be complete without mention of Japan's sewage problem and it is easy to call for 'better housing, roads, schools and universities, social welfare . . .' without noting that the Japanese electorate has, except for a brief interval in 1947-1948, continuously elected conservative governments which can hardly be expected to tackle these areas in a 'socialist direction'. No future coalition government of the Left is likely, anyway, to court unpopularity by raising the low level of direct taxation in any dramatic fashion. It may be that a majority of the Japanese people prefer relatively low provision of public welfare facilities and greater opportunities for personal expenditure.

Japan can take care of its domestic problems but international trade disputes are not going to be solved by Sayle's simplistic picture of a 'stroppy' West enraged that Japan bars all foreign manufactured goods. Fleet Street enjoys knocking Japan and you seem happy to climb on the bandwagon with the prominence you gave to Sayle. It might be useful to recall possible inadequacies in Britain's export efforts to Japan before the recent government-led drive started. The Japanese home market is now largely tariff-free but can hardly be expected to capitulate to British businessmen who stay only a few nights in a Tokyo hotel. It takes patience and considerable investment to gain a toehold in a vast, unfamiliar market previously neglected by many British exporters.

ROGER BUCKLEY.

36 Palace Gardens Terrace
London W8

Dogs of War

Sir, Ian Mather wrote a fascinating piece about post-war Vietnam (NS 4 November) but I think he needs some advice on the subject of eating dogs. No doubt the state of the Vietnamese economy is as bleak as he says; certainly I won't be putting my money into dogs, but I think it wrong to draw any conclusions about living conditions because dog meat is on sale in Hanoi. The Vietnamese like to eat dog and it is considered quite a treat. Indeed, after the Communist victory those of us who remained in Saigon, including James Fenton, witnessed the terrible threats made by a Vietcong company towards a chubby black Labrador that had been the property of an official at the British Chartered Bank there.

It is also wrong to infer that the Communists, as a matter of policy, abandoned their wounded. Or that they were particularly callous in their treatment of the next-of-kin of their killed. As far as their wounded were concerned I believe they did everything possible to recover them when the circumstances permitted. Apart from other considerations, they were not an army unaware of the importance of morale. They were, however, a guerrilla army for much of the war and lacked the resources to do what the Americans and South Vietnamese did. They had no helicopters; their wounded had to be carried out. And the dead. Is Mr Mather seriously suggesting that North Vietnamese Army soldiers killed in the South should have been sent back up the Ho Chi Minh Trail, even towards the end when it was almost a four-lane highway, in the same way that the dead GIs were flown in their refrigerated caskets direct to Los Angeles? It gets very hot in Vietnam and the journey would have taken days. The relatives of British servicemen killed in the world wars were usually notified of their deaths by telegram and rarely recovered their bodies. I cannot recall any historian concluding that this showed the government's indifference to the feelings of the bereaved.

As for Mr Mather's mystification about the exclusive use of Western news photographs in the Da Nang war museum, it is easy enough to explain. It is better propaganda if the evidence of atrocities comes from the enemy, the perpetrator. To my mind photographs of Nazi war crimes are always slightly more chilling when the picture has a snapshot quality and the caption reveals that it was found on a PoW.

COLIN SMITH

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Unions and the BBC

Sir, Where is the logic behind Denis MacShane's argument in his article 'Unions and the BBC' (NS 11 November)? He first acknowledges that senior BBC men are joining ITV to get more money and in the next paragraph he attacks the pay settlement which gave larger increases to the better paid. By the way, what has happened to the widespread clamour earlier this year (the Leyland toolmakers' strike etc.) that the next round in wage settlements should concentrate on restoring eroded differentials? The BBC pay offer does just that, albeit to a very small extent.

V. ROYAN

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London W1

The Greek Key

Sir, In your issue of 2 September last Anthony Burgess speculates on the origin of the slang word 'camp' and suggests either the French word camper, or the 19th-century use of the phrase 'going for a bit of a camp' – that is slipping under the awnings of solders' camps.

The word has also interested H. Montgomery Hyde in his book *The Other Love.* He derives it from the Italian *campeggiare,* meaning to stand out from a background. This does seem to me far-fetched. Montgomery Hyde also comments on the use of the word bent, describing a homosexual, as opposed to a heterosexual, who is straight.

It appears to me, however, that there is an origin that hitherto has not been noticed. In a dictionary of either ancient or modern Greek you will find that the statement I bend is *καμπτω.* There is therefore a direct relationship, (which has been around several thousand years) between Camp and Bent. The root *καμπ* would certainly be pronounced Camp by an Englishman. It seems to me that it is not necessary to look any further than this.

W. D. JONES

Petra
Enterprise
Christchurch, Barbados

Wolf Children

Sir, What a pity that so interesting a book as *The Wolf Children* (I read the serialised extracts in the *Sunday Times*) has been so inadequately dealt with. (One can hardly call Mr Chaudhuri's pompous dissertation on Bengali history, attitudes and customs a review!) He managed to suggest not only that wolf children in general are improbable but also that the ones whose short unhappy lives are described in so much convincing detail in this book were not brought up by wolves at all. But they ran on four legs, ate only with their teeth, refused all food except flesh, snarled at and retreated from humans, howled at night and their only 'friends' were dogs. How on earth, except on the basis of a wolf foster family, could all this be explained?

The book gives a convincing account of the finding of the children. The unfortunate killing of the foster parents (the 'mother' did her best to protect the children and save them from capture), and also explains why different stories of the capture were put out; for what start in life is there for a human who is labelled as 'wolf child'? Lack of ability to speak is the inevitable result of early separation from human contact. Mr Chaudhuri says this suggests 'congenital defect', showing a complete misunderstanding of the situation. It seems clear from the many documented cases that human children are adopted by a variety of animal parents.

Two particularly fascinating cases are described in a book favourably reviewed in your columns a few years ago – *Gazelle Boy.* The author, travelling alone with his camel in the desert, heard of this wonder boy living with antelopes, found the herd and was finally accepted by them. He lived in the same cave, deciphered their 'language' (mainly signs) and observed the boy, who behaved exactly as if he were a gazelle, including running with them at their own speed (40 mph once clocked up on a French military jeep which tried to capture the boy), and existing healthily on their diet of small desert plants. The same book mentions an older nomad boy who wandered and was adopted by ostriches – a particularly interesting case as he afterwards returned to his family and was able to tell of his experiences, including having been hunted by mounted tribesmen who killed ostriches for their feathers.

Another interesting case was reported a few years ago in the *Observer,* which published a picture and an account of an ape boy who was captured when swinging his way through jungle trees. In captivity his resistance to attempts at civilisation was reported, and he retained the habits of his 'family', just as is reported of wolf children whenever they are captured. And lower down the scale is the extraordinary account of an illegitimate boy who was 'disposed of' when young by being left in a big chicken house at the bottom of a large garden. He was discovered years later perching, his toenails 18 inches long, over which he had continually fallen; his legs weak, distorted backwards and broken in many places. He had lived on the same scraps as the hens and was only capable of chicken-like noises.

There is much material on these topics going back many centuries. I am gathering material for a book and would be delighted to hear from anyone interested.

HUBERT ADAMSON

13 Heath Street
London NW3

The Medievalist Case

Sir, Dr Paula Neuss (NS 4 November) neatly presents the dilemma of the teacher of medieval English literature, that if it is presented as 'language' it will be resented by most students, and yet many of the works (such as *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*) demand language-study if they are to be understood at all. The solution adopted by a number of the older universities (such as Oxford and apparently also London) or a meaningless translation exercise unrelated to the study of the works as literature, is futile and even damaging. We think we do it better here, by treating *Sir Gawain* as a text for practical criticism. This obviously involves the element of translation, but the exercise becomes meaningful when it is demonstrated that this is a necessary step on the way to a fuller understanding of a great English poem.

A number of my colleagues whose main interests are in literature of other periods are willing to involve themselves in the teaching of medieval literature, and this is very valuable in helping to break down the traditional barrier between 'language' and 'literature' of which Dr Neuss so rightly complains. The answer is, come to Nottingham!

THORLAC TURVILLE-PETRE

Department of English Studies
The University
Nottingham

Sir, We read the article by Paula Neuss with interest verging on astonishment. Her criticisms of the London undergraduate syllabus for medieval literature and of the uninspired teaching which it induces may be justified, but Dr Neuss's 'unkonnynge' in certain areas is indefensible. If she wishes to know the syllabi at the older universities she has only to visit the library in her own college and collate the information there. While so doing she may also care to read the prospectus for Birkbeck. She appears to be unaware of the MA in Medieval Studies offered by her fellow lecturers in other departments, an inter-disciplinary course from which any English component is regrettably absent. Our group, which graduated in January 1977, consisted of 15 people, two of whom dropped out, one failed and four passed with distinction. We explored History, Philosophy, Art, Religion, Palaeography and Literature in French, German, Spanish and Icelandic, but despite the many openings for comparative study English Literature was not included and we were very conscious of the lack. Nonetheless, we enjoyed ourselves enormously and if Dr Neuss had climbed the stairs to join us we should have welcomed her with enthusiasm and might have provided the opportunity for her to do some 'more interesting' teaching. May we suggest that she should involve herself with the current course, to their mutual benefit?

M. CAMPBELL
M. COGHLAN

4 Cheney Street
Pinner
Middlesex

Guerrilla Journalism

Sir, I was saddened but not altogether surprised that my conclusions on *Terrorism* did not appeal to Stuart Holland (NS 4 November). Since much of his review deals, however, with case studies of guerrilla warfare (such as in Kenya) which I inexcusably, in his view, did not cover, may I mention that *Terrorism* is the second part of a wider study? The first volume, *Guerrilla,* of whose existence Mr Holland seems to be unaware, was published earlier this year. It deals precisely with the topics Mr Holland missed in *Terrorism.*

WALTER LAQUEUR

Centre for Strategic and International Studies
Georgetown University
Washington DC

In the Original

Sir, Paul Johnson (NS 4 November) is a little unjust to Dillwyn Knox's peculiar translation of Herodas. The original is almost equally stilted; it is written in a phoney or joke version of a Greek dialect, in fact it is a literary joke, much like the translation. Not very funny, perhaps, and for all I know Herodas meant to be taken seriously, but Dillwyn Knox was sufficiently a scholar to adopt the style he adopted deliberately, as the funny equivalent of his funny original.

PETER LEVI

St Catherine's College
Oxford

Shock Therapy

Sir, As a 40-year-old with a long history of schizophrenia (now kept relatively sane by regular injections of a major tranquilliser called 'modicate') I have in the past received 48 shocks of electro-convulsive therapy, which, according to Larry Gostin (Letters 28 October) is unsuitable for schizophrenia, but don't as a result feel particularly apathetic, listless or lacking in reasoning power (though my memory is rather poor) – which is perhaps partly borne out by the fact that over the past ten years I have chalked up some 11 prize winning entries in your Weekend Competition (or is this an infallible sign of insanity?).

GEORGE COWLEY

Ward M5
Powick Hospital
Worcester

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Richard Cobb

Notre Dame d'Afrique

A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962
by ALISTAIR HORNE *Macmillan* £8.95

For anyone living in Paris in the 1950s and early 1960s, the interminable Algerian War became so invasive as to impose itself on private life as a sort of insistent, unpredictable and nearly always dramatic secondary calendar that effectively overlaid the regular one of *la rentrée, les fêtes, les aoûtiens* and the summer holidays. It even hung like a shadow over the *bac,* so little removed in time from the threat of conscription. Sakiet, Kovacs and *le coup du bazooka,* the kidnapping of Ben Bella and his companions would act as reminders, years later, of personal joys or disasters, while the ugly vocabulary of racialism – *les ratons, les bicots, les sidis, les crouillahs* (all words still very much to be heard in the world of the shop, the café and the small restaurant) – would creep more and more into remarks picked out on the *métro.*

It was an uncomfortable – even dangerous – time for Southern Italians, Portuguese (two of whom were shot by the Paris police), Turks, Syrians, Lebanese and Iranians. If one had regular contacts with professional people – doctors, lawyers, *professeurs de lycée,* university teachers – one would be certain to know half-a-dozen *insoumis,* for, though they were not at all numerous – perhaps no more than 9,000 – they were vociferous, mostly from the middle-classes and from the Paris region (how could a *métallo* or a car worker *afford* to be an *insoumis*?). And, however reluctantly, because one lived in a 'safe house', one would be likely to accept the temporary presence of a battered suitcase, crammed with literature from the *réseau Jeanson,* lying, like a time-bomb, under one's bed. Later, one could time one's watch from the regular midnight to 3 a.m. *plastiquages.*

For the first time since the bad old days of the *Zone* and the *boulevards extérieurs,* the Buttes-Chaumont and the quays off the Jardin des Plantes, there grew up certain areas of Paris that were best avoided, if one did not wish to be caught in a murderous and undiscriminating cross-fire: the whole quartier de la Goutte-d'Or in the XVIIIme, and the improbably named rue du Château-des-Rentiers in the XIIIme. The quai de Valmy and the quai de Jemmape were likewise best avoided, as neither the FLN nor the MNA showed much sympathy for the chance witnesses of their *réglements de comptes* (they did at least have *that* in common). The *affaire Alleg* and the *affaire Audin* invaded the press and the reviews, while the barracks of le Grand-Quevilly, in the working-class suburbs of Rouen, were at one time the scene of a mutiny. The historian Georges Lefebvre argued with confidence that the FLN were financed by the CIA; the PCF advised Communist conscripts, rather unhelpfully, to obey orders, and then to work from within (while under fire) to convince their fellow-soldiers of the evils of an imperialist war. The war gave limitless scope to the rancid Sartre and the bilious De Beauvoir to express their loathing for the French and their contempt for the common people. And *le mal algérien,* far from being confined to the *pieds noirs,* was readily catchable by French *petits fonctionnaires*: two young PTT workers, both PCF militants, within six weeks of arriving in Algeria, were writing me enthusiastic letters about the accessibility of the beaches, the low rents, and the availability of domestic help, adding that the Algerians did not reason like Europeans. The prolonged presence of *insoumis* in Lausanne helped to internationalise *gauchisme* as a result of contacts with the representatives of the various Angolan factions established there. *La guerre d'Algérie* was a presence one lived with, to such an extent that, when at last it was brought to an end, there seemed to be something missing. There was universal relief, in metropolitan France at least, but there was also a sense of bewilderment. Even in 1968, things would never seem quite as clear-cut again. For the war had been a public debate of the national conscience, a debate that had gone on for over seven years.

As a general account of events for the information of the English reader, Alistair Horne's book is quite unsurpassed, and is likely to remain so. By sticking throughout to the bald narrative – or to several parallel narratives – the author has no need to heighten the dramatic effect of a truly dreadful chronicle of mutual or even triple hatreds, misunderstandings, backslidings, internal dissensions (on all sides), and the ever-mounting toll of the inexorable politics of vengeance. He has a word of understanding for all the protagonists, even for the most fanatical and cruel; and his compassion extends as much to the most vicious and desperate of the *pieds-noirs* (14-year-old killers who, shedding their swimming trunks on their return from the beaches, take out their machine pistols to go in search of targets waiting at tram or bus stops) as to unhappy *gendarmes,* as always loyal to the régime, mown down by the gunmen of the FNF.

Added to the sheer force of an implacable narrative is the author's ability to *see* the situation on the ground and to describe – almost with the eyes of the once habitual user, the *pied-noir* clerk or garage-owner or shop-girl or *bistrotier* – the dramatic topography of Algiers itself and its neighbouring beaches, the blind, cruel dullness of Oran and Constantine, towns as bereft of a past as a city in the Mid-West or a *dorp* in the Free State; a bleak geography of hate, boredom and cruelty, of *machio* and shoeshine. He communicates to the reader the chilly intractability of the Aurès and of Kabylie, and the lush greenery of the Mitidja. Here is a historian who has been over the ground, and who, ten years after Independence, can still read through the dilapidated buildings of once fashionable *plages* in order to decipher the lost messages, the pathetic banalities, the apparently endless reassurance of a regular pattern of leisure and of work, about as remote as a civilisation covered over by volcanic ash. Throughout his careful narrative, he is always at hand to remind you of how one quarter relates to another in an urban geography criss-crossed by as many frontiers, and dotted with as many flashpoints, as present-day Belfast.

For, in an account of a war that always centred on the principal city, pride of place is given throughout to Algiers, *Alger-la-Blanche,* a city that, on the familiar basis of the *planisphère,* of the bus and tram stops, of the traffic signs, and of its predominantly *style 3me République* architecture, seems to offer a deceptively French appearance. What indeed could be more familiar, and so soothing in the assurance of repetition, of itineraries reproduced in dozens of French provincial towns, in garden gnomery and in mass-produced bad taste, than the rue Lafayette, the rue Michelet, the rue Denfert-Rochereau, the rue Richelieu, the Boulevard de Verdun, the Boulevard Marengo, the avenue de la Marne, the avenue Malakoff, the Boulevard Baudin (the great-grandfather, however, of Lagaillarde), the avenue Pasteur, the avenue du Frais-Vallon? The Villa des Roses and the Villa des Tagarins hint of quiet apéritifs in lush suburban gardens. There is even a Bois de Boulogne; and, as in Marseille opposite, a network of *corniches* leads to the beaches along the coast. All the usual components are there: the abattoirs, the PTT cemeteries on the fringes, Notre-Dame-d'Afrique, as ugly as Notre-Dame-de-la-Garde (opposite), gas-works, a tram depot (did the trams, one idly wonders, bear a coat-of-arms?), *lycées, cliniques,* a huge war memorial, dangerously central, at the top of a monumental flight of steps leading from the harbour, much as the Canabière (opposite) leads from the Quai des Belges and the Vieux-Port. Perhaps if there is one lesson for town-planners – and for social historians – to be derived from the apparent banality of the Plan de la Ville of Algiers, it is that war memorials should be placed well on the periphery.

The appearances are indeed so familiar as to be almost unbearable when one follows the author in his relentless account of what happened, again and again, in streets, avenues and squares that might have been those of central Lyon or of the quartier de la Comédie in Marseille. It is this very familiarity that makes the narrative so horrific. The banal vulgarity of le Milk Bar, l'Otomatic, le Cafétaria, le Grand Casino adds inestimably to the sheer horror of the massacres that occurred, more than once,

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in each, as a result of bombings. A bomb factory is discovered in the Villa des Roses; another, more suitably, in l'Impasse de la Grenadi; the avenue du Frais-Vallon, well-treed, could stifle the screams of the tortured; le Coq-Hardi, a restaurant, runs in blood; the bizarre rue de Thèbes is rocked by a huge explosion, a juxtaposition that would have appealed to Cocteau. But, right in the middle, is the impenetrable *casbah*; and, beyond that, Bab-el-Oued, the terrain of *Cagayous*, the *pied-noir* humourist and popular philosopher, wisecracking in his unbelievable *charabia*: Franco-Hispano-Italo-Maltese, with a good smattering of Arabic: *fissa! fissa!*

The more one reads, the more one is struck by the *Orphée*-like qualities of ascending horror: the black Peugeots and the black Citroens of the *commandos Delta*, the black motor-cycles of the 'rembrandts' and the Z-Commandos, the black vehicles of Force C, a lunatic vocabulary of inter-killery, the plots and frustrations of the Villa du Yéti, the chaos of the Palais d'Eté, the long, lightless nights under the curfew, as the killers emerge, the activities of the gunman Boby Dovecar. No wonder Mr Horne frequently evokes *La Peste*!

Such a repetitive account of daily killings, of mindless violence, could be merely sickening; yet, thanks to the author's ever-alert compassion, to his eye for each pathetic detail, it attains a sort of sombre beauty and a dignity that illuminates the whole book. There is room, if not for forgiveness, at least for the beginnings of pity, for even a Susini, suddenly overcome by an unnaccountable desire to visit the *casbah*, before leaving Algiers for ever; even for the *Delta* killer, Degueldre, expendable, and executed, because he was not a general. Lagaillarde is an inflated fool, Perez is a good doctor, adored by his poorer patients, Ortiz is a vulgar *bistrotier* (a *pied-noir* version of Poujade), Susini has got his history wrong. But the author renders them all understandable, and so well on the way to being forgivable.

He leaves it to the reader to select his own heroes and villains – and there are plenty of both. On the Algerian side, my own choice as outstanding heroes would be the picaresque Ali-la-Pointe, an 18th-century bandit figure, with the old *Légionnaire* slogan *marche ou crève* tattooed on his chest – and how close he himself seems to the *Légion*! – the 12-year-old *le petit Omar*, and the magnificently ingenious and sensitive Saadi Yacef, a master of disguise, now a milkman, now a *fatma*, the king of the *casbah*, and, happily, one of the survivors. Each revolution will spew up its Robespierre, in this instance the sinister and inflexible Ramdane, murdered, one is glad to learn, by his own people. On the French side, the real villains are the infamous Mollet, Soustelle, and Lacoste, rather than the generals and the colonels. The one French heroine – there are several Algerian ones – is the admirable Germaine Tillon. The *maire*, Chevallier, is a man of moderation and wisdom, who, typically, elected to remain after Independence. Most of the French officials involved are more to be pitied than blamed, caught up in an intractable problem inherited from over a century of mistakes and capitulations. For them Algeria had the same sort of blighting influence as a posting to Dublin Castle had on several generations of well-meaning Englishmen. Delouvrier at least recovered his career from the wreck. Even the futile Bidault is best summed up by De Gaulle's remark, on learning that he had succeeded to the leadership of the CNA: *enfin une bonne nouvelle!* The little man with the fur collar on his coat does not measure up to the height of a true villain.

It is a pity that such a marvellous book should be marred by a style borrowed from *Time* magazine, as well as by the author's proneness to pontificate on National Character (particularly the *méridional* one). He uses the barbarism 'met with' and draws heavily on a boring American woman called Janet Flanner. Too much flannery. He is sometimes weak on the effects of the war on French society at home, misses the opportunity of using Claire Etcherelli's beautiful novel, *Elise ou la vrai vie*, and fails to underline the importance of the Chamber of Commerce of Marseille as a powerful lever in favour of colonisation. But these are very minor criticisms. His book remains a work of great beauty and insight.

Jonathan Raban

Chaise Longue, Vita Brevis

Professing Poetry by JOHN WAIN *Macmillan* £6.95

In *The Pickwick Papers* there's a story about a man who – having had a few drinks too many – falls into conversation with a chair. The piece of furniture in question is a brown wing affair with leaky stuffing. In the small hours it assumes the character of an affable old man, replete with memories of all the people whose backsides have come to rest in him. John Wain has had much the same experience, except that in his case the Chair is the Oxford Professorship of Poetry, to which he was elected in 1973. *Professing Poetry* is a long, sometimes petulant dialogue with the Chair, in which the Chair usually gets the better of the argument while Wain consumes the lion's share of the drinks.

In the contest against Spender for the privilege of consorting with the Chair for a five-year term, Wain was the 4-1 outsider. No doubt his Bisto Kid appearance was against him: the dustjacket photo shows him beaky and impish, wearing the flattest of flat caps like a Byzantine halo. An unlikely Chairperson; yet his writing at its best has been finer and funnier than that of some of the Chair's previous (and more self-consciously solemn) occupants. He was a busy practising writer; he was living in Oxford; he was thoroughly unstuffy and clearly liked the company of undergradu-

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ates. Successful candidates for the job in the past have had worse qualifications.

Wain, though, seems to have been just as astonished as his critics when the Chair became his. Quoting *Romeo and Juliet* ('It is an honour that I dream not of'), he looks back in wonder to election day and his first gingerish lowering of himself on to the splendid seat. When the results were announced, Peter Levi and Philip Larkin got out of their shared taxi and did a jig on the pavement outside All Souls. Back at the Wain *dacha*, 'Cameras were clicked and flashed at me, tape recorders whirred . . . and pencils flew . . .' It was pure *Boy's Own* adventure, complete with a glamorous female spy in the shape of a mysterious girl 'in a big hat' who insinuated herself into all the press photographs of Wain in his garden. (Later in the story she turns up in Stoke on Trent, where she reads a beastly notice of Wain's play over the radio.)

After the excitement of the hustings Wain took himself off to a Welsh mountain top, where he brooded on things Celtic and prepared himself for his first great ordeal with the Chair. It must, indeed, have been in Caernarvonshire that the Chair first started to speak to him; for his Inaugural reveals him as a changed man. All the cheek and lightness that his critics had anticipated are gone. In their place is a kind of maundering stodgy rumble – the authentic accents of the Chair itself. The title, 'Alternative Poetry', must have been Wain's own, but the contents are horsehair, old pennies and broken springs. The Chair burbles on about Finn MacCumhail, MacPherson's Ossian and the *Zeitgeist*, and draws an impossibly sketchy and far-fetched parallel between the 18th century and the 1960s, when the aim of poetry was 'to simulate the ravings of a drug addict'. It is, I've noticed, a weakness common to Chairs that they love disencumbering themselves of tetchy generalities, oiled along by Latin tags like *mutatis mutandis*; and the Oxford Chair is an old horror at this game. Poor Wain. It is no surprise to learn at the end that he was relieved to escape from the Sheldonian to the pub across the road 'for beer and sausages and a let-down of tension'. It's hard work being a ventriloquist's dummy. After the lecture, there was 'another hysterical attack on me' in the *TLS*.

The Inaugural was the Chair's brightest (and Wain's darkest) hour. In no subsequent lecture did it assert its curmudgeonly presence quite so forcefully: there was no longer any need to do so, since Wain had now felt the grip of its claw feet and was a ready collaborator in its designs. Its chief accomplishment was that it had taught Wain the old buffer's trick of being able to speak at great length without occasion or point. The nine lectures which make up about two-thirds of *Professing Poetry* (when the book went to press, there were still six more to come) are as innocent of purpose and direction as becalmed yachts in the Doldrums.

On the poetry of Auden, on Emily Dickinson, on the first night of *Comus*, on Philip Larkin, on Poetry and Society, on William Empson, Wain is bland, mildly informative, unpretentious and dull. He works doggedly on at poem after poem, teasing out the obvious and documenting the already familiar:

> The third stanza makes a jump from the juggler and his apples to another theme from entomology, like the ants. Once again I do not know exactly what kind of beetles are referred to . . .

Sometimes all one hears is the sound of Wain's pencil being chewed to death at the wrong end:

> Choice of life-style is one of Philip Larkin's recurrent themes . . . Another of Larkin's themes is history . . .

The Chair snored comfortably, approvingly, through that one. It's particularly ironic that Empson should be one of Wain's subjects, since Empson, more than any other critic, has demonstrated that close textual exegesis is a way of getting somewhere fast and intelligently. In Wain's hands, close reading is rarely much more than a means of passing the time ('Larkin picks out and focuses this kind of detail because he is imagining the situation intensely . . .'). These pedestrian glosses, like the hands of the clock in the Sheldonian, move slowly indeed.

In the lecture on *Comus* there is at least a hint of something altogether livelier, when Wain, drawing on an article by Barbara Breasted, tells the story of the Castlehaven Scandal, and at long last Wain the raconteur and gossip (and the author of his best fiction) gets a brief airing. This neglected wretch is let out again in the last, and much the best, lecture, on Edward and Helen Thomas, a warm anecdotal piece which is only occasionally marred by asides from the Chair on the subject of Edward Thomas's poetry ('The poem uses four separate ingredients, which it sets out to blend into a unity . . .').

It is only in the lecture on the Thomases that the Chair's occupant bears any discernible resemblance to the amiable chap who sports in these pages between grisly appointments at the Sheldonian. Yevtushenko called him 'a juicy man' (the Chair had an attack of wind when it heard, and kept Wain in detention for a week doing extra exegeses). He sang a 12-bar blues with the Mike Garrick Quintet. He had a tremendous, hard-drinking time when his play was put on by Peter Cheeseman in the Victoria Theatre, Stoke. He finished his biography of Johnson. He thought about starting a novel. He wrote a clutch of poems (included in an appendix). In Oxford he spent long sessions with young, uncelebrated writers, and he reprints many of their poems here.

Away from the awful vigilance of the Chair, Wain's prose eases up. On its home ground it is a genial, foggy instrument: good-humoured, schmaltzy, generous, a beer-and-sausages style. Lecturing on the work of his friend Philip Larkin, the best he could manage was a strained impersonation of the inimitable angostura bitters manner of C. B. Cox and the *Critical Quarterly*ites; writing, off-duty, about the poems of his Oxford friend Sally Purcell, he hits an altogether different note.

> Sally, with her pale gentle face and long straight fair hair, often has the withdrawn tranquillity of a 14th-century madonna . . . she is a gentle feminine Villon, without the violence and rascality. She supports herself by working as a barmaid, and at closing time in the afternoon goes across the road from the King's Arms to the Bodleian, dividing her working hours between the tavern and the study. In this she is profoundly wise.

It's not criticism, admittedly. Nor is it exactly a smash as a piece of prose. But it is a great deal more interesting than most of the *ex cathedra* stuff in *Professing Poetry*. The truth is that Wain likes writing, likes writers, likes writers' lives, and likes getting drunk with writers – all worthy affections, and ones that should have given him some substance for his Oxford lectures. He is an engaging man, and a good storyteller, but he has no gift at all for the sonorous abstractions and dissections which he affects from the rostrum. The trouble is that for all his talk about maintaining standards and tending 'the poor beast' of the English language, Wain is a casual and sloppy critic. His idiosyncrasies are ones of manner not of mind; his talents are anecdotal rather than analytic. It is a great pity that he didn't stick to his own last; since the academic world is already full to overflowing with talking chairs.

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Paul Johnson

The Last Cavalier

Joseph Chamberlain by ENOCH POWELL
Thames & Hudson £4.95
Wrestling with the Angel by ENOCH POWELL
Sheldon Press £3.50

Logic and consistency are universally applauded political virtues. But in practice politicians do not display them any more than the rest of us. Indeed, the most serious politicians are those who respond the readiest to change. Inevitably, however, a politician is bound to act and speak in public in support of collective decisions; he cannot therefore make the world privy to the subtle progression of new ideas in his mind, or the gradual erosion of old convictions. Hence the great thunderclaps of changed allegiance which punctuate and disturb public life. In June 1885 Joe Chamberlain supported 'the concession to Ireland of the right to govern itself in the matter of its purely domestic business'. In March the next year he resigned from the government because that was precisely what Gladstone proposed to do.

Enoch Powell rightly sees this abrupt and still mysterious change of front to be the hinge on which Chamberlain's whole life revolved. Before it he was a radical, a progressive, a Little Englander, a critic of authority (and authoritarians), a hater of tradition and an apostle of scientific reform. After it, by an inevitable process, he became a stern defender of authority, an imperialist, a social conservative, a refurbisher of tradition and a political romantic. In both capacities he enjoyed an enormous popular following in what was then Britain's most dynamic city. It was from Birmingham that he created the modern Liberal Party in the 1870s; and it was in Birmingham, in 1906, that he and his clan alone stemmed the Liberal flood, retaining all their seven seats with increased majorities. Yet, as a whole, his political life was a failure: the second half of it, as it were, cancelled out the first, and he broke the Unionists over tariff-reform as he had broken the Liberals over Ireland.

Powell studies this phenomenon with gloomy relish. He sees the key to the workings of Chamberlain's mind in a fatal and reluctant attraction to federalism. Federalism, on the analogy of effective local government within a nation-state, would solve the problem of Ireland's relations to Britain (and of Ulster's relations to the rest of Ireland), and would likewise allow the empire to develop into a permanent international structure, combining free trade within with tariff-protection from without. But there is no analogy between local government and international federalism. A state, as Powell points out, is a nation in its own right, or it is not. Ireland was such a nation, as was Britain. Nationhood implies sovereignty and sovereignty must be reflected in Parliament. So federalism would not work for Britain and Ireland and it would not work for the empire, since its self-governing colonies 'were, by necessity of circumstances, nations in their own right'. Chamberlain's 'labour was in vain and the years have condemned it'. His original conviction that Home Rule would not work was 'a rock-like truth', and the arguments against it applied with equal force to his various federal schemes. The 'pathos' of his life, according to Powell, was that 'he placed himself in conflict with his own axiom and foredoomed his handiwork to frustration and failure'.

There are clear parallels between Chamberlain's political life and Powell's own, notably in his stands over the Common Market and Ulster. Powell, too, is a Midlander with a huge popular following and a contempt for party structures and orthodoxies. I suspect it was to stress these parallels that he wrote this book and concentrated on the Irish 'hinge'. So this is a portrait of Chamberlain (a shrewd one too) but also, in a weird way, a self-portrait. Powell even gives himself, if his future should prove as bleak as it now looks, an exculpatory epigram: 'All political lives, unless they are cut off in midstream at a happy juncture, end in failure, because that is the nature of politics and of human affairs.'

But we have here a hint of self-indulgence. Chamberlain really had little in common with Powell. He remained a Roundhead, even though he donned Cavalier clothes, and Powell is a Cavalier first and last. Chamberlain was a first-rate machine politician who was obsessed more with power than principle. Had it not been for his stroke, he must surely, as he plainly intended, have captured the Tory Party from Balfour, and made it into his own instrument. Powell, or so it seems to me, has always been more interested in the resonances and rhetoric of power than in its dusty reality. In that respect he has much more in common with Charles James Fox or Aneurin Bevan than with Birmingham Joe. Then too, unlike Chamberlain, he is a highly educated man, with a sophisticated sense of humour; and he is a Christian.

Powell is the first leading British politician since Sir Stafford Cripps to take his Christianity seriously (Margaret Thatcher will ensure that he is not the last). Unlike Cripps, though, he is not a moralist but a theologian. Powell is not the kind of Chancellor who would pore over his New Testament before constructing his budget. He knows it too well, or rather – Cripps knew it well too – he has studied it both as a scholar and as a churchman and knows how to ask questions which will make it live afresh.

Some of the little talks and sermons he has collected in *Wrestling with the Angel* are models of their kind: brief, original, thought-provoking, and a nice mixture of didacticism and diffidence. He often tells his audience that he does not know the answers and that no answers may be forthcoming in terms of our human understanding. He is a Cavalier Christian as well as a Cavalier politician, as much fascinated by the paradoxes and mysteries of Christianity as by its certitudes. He prints in this book the transcript of a TV discussion he had with Bryan Magee, in which Magee, with great earnestness and unction – and rising irritation, one gathers – invites agreement to the (to him) incontrovertible proposition that all Christians ought to share the social and political sentiments of right-wing members of the Labour Party. Very politely, Powell sticks to his view that Christianity is not a guide to terrestrial dilemmas but an alternative to them. Reading these two short books persuades me that he is probably a better judge of Christianity than he is of politics.

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Why Not The Best? by JIMMY CARTER *Kingsway* £4.50
The Man From Plains: The Mind and Spirit of Jimmy Carter by DAVID KUCHARSKY *Collins* £2.95

Since he became President of the United States ten months ago, Jimmy Carter has come to seem a far less outlandish figure than he did when he was running for the office. Most people have got used to the strangeness of a US President with a genuine Southern accent. His former originality and brave schemes seem to have seeped away. His preoccupations now are little different from those of most of his recent predecessors, as he is blocked by Congress, attacked by the groups that got him elected, and told confidently by the Washington columnists how to improve his ratings. It is useful to be reminded by these two books that he is not in fact the bland, orthodox figure he sometimes these days appears to be. *Why Not The Best?* is his autobiography. It originally came out as a shot in his campaign for the Presidency. It is not clear why this work should suddenly now be published in Britain; nor why it should appear in a 'Presidential Edition' (meaning that it concludes with a brief postscript written by Carter since he became President) from a publisher in Eastbourne.

Nevertheless, though the book contains much dross, such as Carter's acceptance speech to the Democratic Convention in New York, it is in many ways worth reading, or re-reading, especially if, as Carter's campaign staff used to swear, it was written by the candidate himself. To begin with, one is forced to remember that it is only 14 years since Carter first became a politician. Even then he was only a Georgia state legislator, which is as near as a man can get to not being a politician at all – the Georgia legislature meets in legislative session for a mere 40 days a year. Carter is a tyro. If he has not yet learned how to run the most powerful office on earth, no one should be surprised. It is also worth being reminded that Carter has had three highly successful careers in three totally different walks of life: as a serious, professional naval officer, as an ingenious and successful businessman, and as a politician. As his autobiography makes plain, he is a natural activist. He is no Gerald Ford. His critics are calling him ineffectual, but he will not be content with that label.

He says near the beginning of his book: 'My black playmates were the ones who joined me' – on his father's farm –

> in field work that was suitable for younger boys. We were the ones who 'toted' fresh water to the more adult workers in the field. We mopped the cotton, turned sweet potato and watermelon vines, toted the stove wood, swept the yards, carried slop to the hogs, and gathered eggs.
>
> We hunted, fished, explored, worked and slept together. We ran, swam, rode horses, drove wagons, and floated on rafts together . . . But we never went to the same church or school. There was scrupulous compliance with these unwritten or unspoken rules. I never heard them questioned. *Not then.*

The most interesting, and significant, theme of the book is the way Carter himself came to question these rules. No one should underestimate the steamy, squalid atmosphere of pervasive racism in which he grew up, or the way he emerged from it clean. 'The time for racial discrimination is over,' he announced in his inauguration speech as governor of Georgia. His local political enemy for years was Lester Maddox, the man with the axe handle, to be used against blacks trying to enter his restaurant. Since Carter started to take an interest in national office, ill-wishers have crawled over every inch of his record in his home state; but no one has seriously dented his claim, set out in this book, that he has a fine record on race. To be a liberal in Carter's South was little easier, and required little less courage, than to be a liberal during the same period in South Africa.

Moreover, he did not merely recognise black rights. He learned from blacks. The author of the second of these books – a series of essays on Carter and the American evangelical tradition – is the managing editor of *Christianity Today*. Mr Kucharsky explains that the white Southern Baptists to whom Carter belonged had a conservative tradition. They did not connect – nor on the whole do they now – their Christian beliefs with any desire for social reform or change. But the black Southern Baptists did.

Their black spiritual leaders became black political leaders. Malcolm Muggeridge, in an introduction to Mr Kucharsky's book, notes that 'for the first time in the history of the US the authentic voice of evangelical Christianity is heard, not just at Moodey and Sankey revivalist conventions and Billy Graham crusades, but in the very citadel of power in Washington, DC.' The US has had two other Baptist presidents, Harding and Truman, but neither could be described as religious. Mr Muggeridge compares Carter to the Emperor Constantine and asks: 'Did Constantine become a Christian for policy reasons or because of his genuine acceptance of Christ as saviour?' He poses the same question about Carter.

Mr Muggeridge leaves the answer open; but he is being unduly cautious. There is little room for doubt that Carter is a genuine believer, though he admits to having elliptical thoughts while a naval cadet at Annapolis. He has not talked so much about his religion since he went into the White House, but there is also little doubt that he considers his role, as President, to be that of a spiritual as well as a political leader. Before he was elected, the most insistent question asked about him was the degree to which his religion might interfere with his political judgment. What if God told him to press the button? Since he took office, the question has faded away. Whatever people may think of his presidential performance so far, very few think that he is a bad president, or a dangerous president, because of his Baptist beliefs. But the Baptist believer is still in there.

Will he ever again emerge? It is imaginable that the one area of policy in which belief might produce action is over South Africa. Both Carter and Andy Young – himself a former minister – think they understand the South African problem, coming themselves from the American South. Once the Southern religious, political and business leaders saw a mutual interest in pushing together in the same direction, white supremacy crumbled, even if the rednecks still muttered in the bushes. Carter and Young show signs of believing that under carefully applied pressure, South Africa might change with equally unpredictable speed. In that case we may be about to see an historic clash between two branches of fundamentalist Christianity: the Dutch Reformed Church and the (Carter-style) Southern Baptists.

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RICHARD COBB is Professor of Modern History at Oxford.

PETER CONRAD is the author of *The Victorian Treasure House.*

MARC recently provided the cover illustrations for the Fontana edition of *A Dance to the Music of Time.*

ANDREW SAINT is the author of *Richard Norman Shaw* (Yale).

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ART BOOKS

Clive James

Flights of Angels

The Drawings by Sandro Botticelli for Dante's Divine Comedy with an introduction by KENNETH CLARK *Thames & Hudson* £35

The coffee-table art book and the standard scholarly work are usually two different things, but occasionally the one volume must serve both purposes, to the benefit of the layman, even if the scholar feels let down. Speaking as a layman, I can only say that if I had not already possessed a coffee-table I would have been willing to construct one, merely for the purpose of receiving *The Drawings by Sandro Botticelli for Dante's Divine Comedy*. Visually, if not verbally, this must be one of the most resplendent books ever to have been made generally available. The price might seem high, but your local library will be getting a lot for its money. Just to make a preliminary acquaintance with the drawings takes weeks, they are so finely detailed – although Botticelli's authority for the task convinces you at first glance.

Until the advent of this volume, a first glance was the most you could hope to get. The original drawings are in Berlin and the Vatican. Lippmann's edition of 1877, reproducing the drawings full-size in collotype, has always been a specialist tool: you need a crane to turn the pages. Some of the drawings, painfully reduced, were in the Nonesuch Dante. Dover's paperback of selected reproductions could give you only some idea. Now here are all the surviving drawings in their proper order, in photographic copies as near to full-size as is convenient, with the narrow tonal range of ink and vellum faithfully adhered to. The more you look, the more you see, and the more it becomes evident that Lorenzino de Medici – Lorenzo the Magnificent's inspired cousin – commissioned the right man to illustrate Dante. Since Lorenzino also commissioned the *Primavera* and the *Birth of Venus*, his track record with regard to Botticelli may confidently be said to have been pretty good.

As Lord Clark points out in a typically comprehensive (though atypically stilted) introductory essay, Botticelli was an obsessive student of Dante. Like Michelangelo – whose Dante drawings are lost, if they ever existed – Botticelli had an intellectual commitment to the *Divine Comedy*, not just an emotional response. The task of illustrating the poem called on the full resources of both mind and heart. Everything he had to offer went on show. His full mental range, which is locked together so tightly in his paintings that only the erudite iconographical studies of scholars like Wind can spring it all loose, is in these drawings spread out so as to be easily intelligible and all the more wondered at.

It is not a matter of technical equipment. Botticelli knows and cares little about dramatic relief: though enormously more resourceful, he is still recognisably in the same world as Giotto. It took Gustav Doré, who in terms of theatricality was only a step away from Walt Disney, to echo something of Dante's immediate impact. But Doré echoed that impact romantically, by lighting a selected subject and casting the surroundings into shadow. Dante is never like that, and nor is Botticelli. It might be disappointing that Botticelli does not figuratively reflect the heroic stature Dante gives Farinata (*Inferno* X) or Ulysses (*Inferno* XXVI) but such losses in drama are more than made up for by the uniformly clear intensity of his draughtmanship – a linked narrative providing the exact graphic equivalent of Dante's closely focused language, which illuminates everything it touches.

Yet even with that said, it is still remarkable how often Botticelli *does* manage to capture something of his author's dramatic power. When Virgil and Dante catch a lift from the flying monster Geryon in *Inferno* XVII, Dante achieves the most amazing effects of flight: Geryon backs off from the rim of Malebolge and turns down and away like a glider. Botticelli gets the same effect by drawing Geryon in several positions, sliding back at a shallow angle and then tilting impassively down, the long hair on his eerily human head suddenly tousled by the air-stream and the rising thermals from the Eighth Circle. I must have looked at the drawing dozens of times before noticing what the wind does to Geryon's hair. Botticelli's *thoughtfulness* strikes you over and over again – an inexhaustible subtlety, delicacy made robust by force of imagination.

The gravity-defying ascent of Dante and Beatrice in *Paradiso* I is registered by Botticelli in a design that uncannily forecasts Michelangelo's visions of Christ floating from the tomb. The whole of the High Renaissance seems implicit in these drawings. Lord Clark points out the connection between Botticelli's and Leonardo's angels and indeed it is hard to miss: there is one in the drawing for *Purgatorio* XII that sharply recalls the Uffizi *Annunciation*. But the drawings would count as a teeming source-book of concrete images even if they connected up with nobody except Botticelli himself. Nobody could look at Matilda gathering flowers in *Purgatorio* XXVIII without thinking of the *Primavera*.

Botticelli's failures are few, and were sometimes Dante's in the first place. The two-page fold-out Satan (*Inferno* XXXIV) is an ape-suited heavy, but Dante's version is (whisper it) not much better. In the vexed case of Beatrice's arrival (*Purgatorio* XIX and XX), Botticelli actually comes close to redeeming the one unarguable flop in the whole poem. It is reasonable that Dante should weigh Beatrice down with allegorical trappings, but disappointing – and I can't believe it was anything else even at the time – to make her look like, of all things, an admiral. Botticelli has done a good job of injecting life into the symbolism and would have pulled off an unequivocal triumph if only he had done more for Beatrice's personal appearance. Instead of making her look like an admiral, he makes her look like Mr Roy Hattersley – a step in the right direction, but not far enough. Later in the drawings, however, she is suitably beautiful, especially in the sphere of Jupiter (*Paradiso* XX).

The true disappointments lie in the scenes unattempted, or else gone missing. There is no drawing for *Paradiso* XXXI, in which Dante, at the height of his lucid imagination, describes Paradise as being like a giant white rose, with angels diving through it like bees. Imagine what Botticelli would have done with *that*. The drawing for *Inferno* V was purloined long ago – not surprisingly, since Paolo and Francesca have always been everybody's favourite Dante pin-ups.

Indeed Paolo and Francesca are as far as most non-Italians ever get with Dante, so it is doubly a shame that Lord Clark writes about Virgil talking to the tragic

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lovers. In fact it is Dante who talks to them: Virgil talks only to Dante. A venial slip, but indicative of a general bittiness in editorial control. Word-wise, the book is a dog's breakfast. Scholars are not likely to appreciate George Robinson's commentary if there are any more howlers like the one in his exposition of *Inferno* XIX, where the Pope upside down in the hole is identified as Boniface III. Even as a misprint for Boniface VIII, this would not pass, since the inverted pontiff happens to be Nicholas III, who mistakes *Dante* for Boniface VIII.

Let any such errors be corrected, however, and the volume would still be lumbered with John Ciardi's translations from Dante, of which the best you can say is that they are not as bad as Dorothy Sayers's. What the facing pages need, instead of the verbal ballast they have got now, is the relevant passages in the original language; a prose translation of established quality, such as Sinclair's; and a commentary which conveys something of what humanist scholars like Sapegno have done to synthesise the critical tradition. But failing all that, the book as it stands is still a treasure-house. Those unacquainted with Dante will find out a lot about Botticelli, and may rest assured that the more they get to know about the poem, the more they will be gratified by how the poet's luminous originality survives undimmed in the artist's disciplined fragility of line.

John Spurling

Weight & See

The Notebooks of Edgar Degas: a Catalogue by THEODORE REFF Oxford 2 vols £45
William Blake: The Seer and His Visions by MILTON KLONSKY *Orbis* £6.50
Blake as an Artist by DAVID BINDMAN *Phaidon* £9.95
Reynolds Stone Engravings *Murray* £20
Art Today: From Abstract Expressionism to Superrealism by EDWARD LUCIE-SMITH *Phaidon* £11.95

Two years before the Impressionist exhibition, Degas, one of its most assiduous organisers, wrote to a friend: 'One loves and gives art only to the things to which one is accustomed. New things capture your fancy and bore you by turns.' His 38 surviving notebooks are the detailed record of how an artist steeped in tradition, loving the Masters, gradually emerged as an innovator, the new moon in the arms of the old. As one might expect, the earlier notebooks are full of copies of the Italian masters of the Renaissance, and the later ones increasingly occupied with sketches of contemporary life, café singers, criminals in the dock, dancers, jockeys and laundresses; but it is fascinating to see how many of his familiar subjects seem to have come to him in the first place not from life but art. The dancer twisting round to tie up her stocking makes her debut here as one of the soldiers copied from Michelangelo's cartoon for *The Battle of Cascina*; the horses that later bear jockeys and amble about Longchamp are bred out of Géricault; and the first laundress in these pages is an actress playing an artist's model dressed as a laundress in a play by Degas' friend Halévy. As for the women washing and drying themselves, they never appear in person, but there's an untenanted bath-tub and some early sketches for a historical composition of Andromache at the wall of Troy bemoaning the death of Hector, in one of which Andromache and her attendant are shown nude from the back as if they had just rushed up from their bath.

Theodore Reff's introduction explores the evolution of the style of Degas' drawings as well as their content, and his catalogue is complete to the point of delirium. Funes the Memorious, in Borges's story, could remember all the cloud formations he had ever seen, but Reff describes every faintest outline that may be discerned on these hallowed pages and quotes every word of Degas' extensive notes, filling 19 pages of notebook 1, from Jean Cousin's *L'Art de Dessiner*. In notebook 8, used in Rome when he was 22, he writes 'Ah! comme la doute et l'incertitude me fatiguent' and a year or two later he waxes emotional over a visit to Assisi; but chiefly he writes down quotations from others, the addresses of friends (once a list of fellow painters' weights, showing himself to be much the lightest), or detailed colour notes.

This is a book to pore over or not to tangle with at all, a daunting display of what that famous freshness of line derived from: 'it is essential,' wrote Degas after the last of these notebooks had been filled, 'to do the same subject over and over again, ten times, a hundred times. Nothing in art must seem to be accidental, not even movement.'

'Nature has no outline,' said Blake, 'Imagination has.' Nature, or Vala in Blake's elaborate mythology (is Mrs Whitehouse aware of what the Viewers' and Listeners' Association stands for?), is only a projection of our own emotions; to accept this material world as real is to be an atheist, a rationalist, a Newtonian. Imagination, on the other hand, personified as Los, is the creator of everything we see and, working through poets and artists, 'the Prophet of Eternity'. I suspect there are many who still take Blake's pictures to mean the opposite of what they were intended to mean, for example that the powerful Michelangelesque figure of *The Ancient of Days*, stooping out of his sun to measure chaos with a pair of dividers, is a good god, whereas he is actually 'Old Nobodaddy'. It is always a bad sign when Blake depicts someone with his head below the level of his shoulders, worse still when, like Newton himself in another famous print, he is holding a pair of dividers in his left hand. Two new books give us time to prepare ourselves for the Blake Exhibition at the Tate next March. Milton Klonsky's begins rather shakily with an account of the author's own LSD experience on a New York beach (to establish the validity of the visionary posture) but blossoms into a useful short guide to Blake's half-ludicrous, half-impressive universe. The large, excellent illustrations are each interpreted separately on the same page. David Bindman's *Blake as an Artist* is more scholarly, more comprehensive and much better written, but it suffers from sadly inadequate illustrations, all herded together in the middle of the book and some of them wrongly numbered. Also I am sorry to say that at one point Bindman's scholarship fails him: he describes Blake's illustrations to Virgil's *First Eclogue* as woodcuts, whereas they are of course, as Klonsky knows, wood engravings.

The difference is explained (not entirely satisfactorily) by Kenneth Clark in his foreword to a book devoted to the work of Reynolds Stone. Thomas Bewick was the great master of this art, which hardly existed before him. It became a common method of reproducing drawings and photographs in the 19th century, then partly lapsed until it was revived by Eric Gill and Gwen Raverat among others. Reynolds Stone is its living doyen, better known by his work than by name : the label for London Library books is his, the device over *The Times* leader-page (though somewhat tampered with since he first engraved it in 1948), the fox device on books published by Hart-Davis and the jacket design for the New English Bible. His best work is his most private: small, intensely observed scenes inside dark woods, where the boles of trees rise like the masts of sinking ships out of a dense sea of ferns and creepers. At the National Book League's current exhibition of Stone's work one can also see the tools of his difficult art, but the book, beautifully laid out, is an exhibition in itself.

Blake, who was an early believer in the permanent revolution, would not have been surprised that his notion of the artist as 'prophet of Eternity' should, a century and a half later, have become institutionalised. In a strange book called *Art Today* Edward Lucie-Smith suggests that the artist of the 1970s

> sees himself as a shaman, and . . . a 'chosen' being, whose claims to be recognised as an artist are dependent not upon anything he has produced or may produce, but upon some inherent quality which the rest of us . . . are bound to recognise.

This tone of equable disapproval is about as far as Lucie-Smith goes towards making a personal judgment, as he threads his way from Matisse to Superrealism with the skill of a Theseus prepared to chart the labyrinth of styles and movements without ever coming face-to-face with the minotaur or art which intermittently inhabits them. His skill is the more remarkable since the sumptuous colour-plates seem to have begun life as a series of 12 books published in Tokyo. They were then brought together with Lucie-Smith's text for an Italian publication last year which is now republished in English. So our man has had to tailor his discourse to fit someone else's choice of illustrations. No wonder that occasionally he can't forebear to slip in an artist who is not illustrated at all, or to dismiss with uncharacteristic asperity one such as Frank Stella who is given a six-page spread. The introduction by Gillo Dorfles is chiefly concerned to name a large number of artists, many of them Italian, who are neither illustrated nor mentioned by Lucie-Smith. The book ought perhaps to be retitled *Art Publishing Today*.

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Slide Show

Animals and Men by KENNETH CLARK
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The Cult of Elizabeth by ROY STRONG
Thames & Hudson £11.50

Art historians enjoy two enviable professional perks: they can lecture in the dark, conjuring up images from the slide projector with a casual snap of the fingers, and they can compile picture-books, transforming the assembly of a scrap-book of aesthetic favourites into an iconographic discipline. Roy Strong in *The Cult of Elizabeth* uses the illustrative juxtapositions of the format for purposes of detection, combining his customary giddy celebration of Elizabethan pageantry with a closer scholarly investigation of pictorial identities and political motives; Kenneth Clark allows critical argument and the profuse gallery of illustrations to slide apart. He has written an essay on the relations between men and animals, ranging speculatively through the history of religion and the psychology of sentiment, as an introduction to the more detailed study of animals in art unfolded in the section of plates. On this occasion, rather like Axël, he's left scholarship to his servants: three researchers have drafted the captions to the plates, which occupy three-quarters of the volume. 'They have expanded my ideas and given substance to my hints and guesses,' says Lord Clark, but his own acuteness of perception makes one regret that he didn't do the job himself.

As it is, his critical judgments in *Animals and Men* are often enigmatic or disconcerting. Personal bias becomes law, as when the saturnine and disdainful animal Velasquez included in *Las Meninas* is said to be 'the greatest dog in art', or when, startlingly, Stubbs is singled out as 'perhaps the only English painter to whom the word classic may be correctly applied'. Elsewhere, although Clark is incapable of describing an object without illuminating it, the tone of his commentary seems weary, even perverse. The categories under which he appraises animals recall those employed in *The Nude* – the difference marked here between 'animals observed' and 'animals beloved' is roughly equivalent to the earlier discrimination between the mere exposure of nakedness and the poise of nudity; and both books contain chapters on energy – but this connection only sharpens our sense of a disparity of mood. *The Nude* extolled and exemplified a heroic humanism which Clark now seems to have renounced. Of course the noble optimism appropriate to the 'ideal art' which perfects and redeems the human body would hardly fit a study of animals, exploited by human rapacity and enslaved by officious human kindness. Yet the difference is not only that between the abstractions of classicism and the more domesticated, unheroic actuality of genre painting, where most of Clark's animals are to be found. For *Animals and Men* warns of a de-conversion, a loss of confidence in the god-like man over whom *The Nude* enthuses.

Even our human liberation from the animal world is now a cause of discomfort and even guilt: Clark quotes Edith Wharton's admission that animals disturbed her because they were a reproachful reminder of 'the lost age when we human beings branched off and left them: left them to eternal inarticulateness and slavery. Why? Their eyes seem to ask us'. The more Lord Clark sees of men, perhaps, the more he likes animals. Hence his jibes at a classicism which has come to seem hyperbolic and mendacious. In the Vatican, he confesses to preferring the Sala degli Animali to 'the corridors of idealised humanity'. The Renaissance is too arrogantly high-minded to acknowledge a kinship with animals: 'Raphael's splendid horses are more a tribute to Antiquity than to nature.' The most imposing façade of classicism conceals an abbatoir: in a section on the obscenity of animal sacrifice, Clark reports that during the ceremonial killings 'the Parthenon is said to have stunk like a slaughterhouse'.

Roy Strong is as ardent and elated about his subject as Kenneth Clark is downcast and sceptical. The refrain of his account of Elizabethan pageantry is a shrill excitement: 'what a cavalcade it must have been!' At times, the tone is positively debby: a courtly marriage is called 'the social event of the summer of 1600'. Roy Strong acknowledges that the mythology of Elizabethan humanism was an apparatus of obsequious compliment and theological error, but, unlike Clark on the ensanguined Parthenon or the frigid perfection of Renaissance art, he admires the very flimsiness and outlandishness of the cult of Elizabeth, which eclectically compounded archaic chivalry, neo-Platonic mysticism and Protestant sermonising. He is dazzled by the nonchalance with which a flattering image can erase a shaming actuality: just when Elizabeth was declining into a bitter harridan, the painters took to representing her as a love-goddess, eternally young.

The scholarship of *The Cult of Elizabeth* – reinterpreting Peake's procession picture, discovering in Hilliard's young man amongst roses a compact biography of Essex, unriddling the allusive mythology of the Accession Day tilts – is brilliant. But, as we all know, Roy Strong is no mousy archival detective. He is also an entrepreneur and a gadabout, an organiser of exhibitions and something of an exhibitionist, and this persona also has a hand in his new book.

However, even vulgarity has a certain appropriateness here, for Strong is at least aware of the fawning political uses of this Renaissance mythology, which his fellow-scholars have treated with too much academic reverence. In this same gallimaufry of moral allegory and political intrigue, Edgar Wind found an atavistic tradition of mysticism, and Frances Yates a devious new underworld of occultism; but Strong sees only the relentless operation of a propaganda machine, cynically fabricating and marketing images. For him, Elizabeth I is a figure in the history of publicity; and he ought to know.

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Marc

The Foggiest

Beerbohm's Literary Caricatures by J. G. RIEWALD *Allen Lane* £7.50

Soon after Max Beerbohm, just down from Oxford, published his essay on cosmetics for the *Yellow Book*, he was interviewed by Ada Leverson for the *Sketch* magazine. She asked him if he was going to give up caricature for literature. The underlying implication has dogged him to this day; and J. G. Riewald, while dutifully admiring Beerbohm's graphic skill, has now produced a volume arguing that his caricatures are really literary criticism anyway.

It is not exactly that his caricatures are under-rated; but he is seen primarily as a writer who also did these amusing caricatures on the side, though of course he couldn't draw hands (the standard put-down of the hack portrait painter, an aspect of the visual arts that the English dimly respect). The English literary establishment has generally looked down on artists. In the Thirties they may have had few to look up to; but did Lytton Strachey, for example, fail to encourage Carrington as a painter because he didn't value her art or because he needed a housekeeper? The more charitable view is indicated by his one-time fiancée, Virginia Woolf, writing to a favourite nephew:

> How in God's name can you be a painter? Surely you must see the infinite superiority of the language to paint? Think of how many things are impossible in paint; giving pain to the Keyneses . . .

– overlooking caricature, which could give pain to the Keyneses rather effectively.

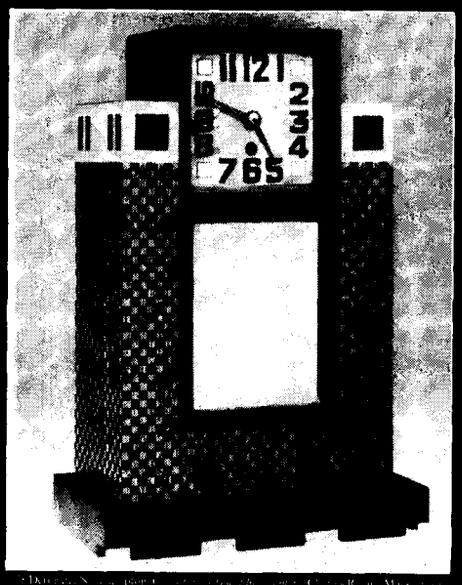
Apart from the parodies, I must confess to a comparative lack of enthusiasm for Beerbohm's writing; *Zuleika Dobson* in particular has no charm for me. Curiously his caricatures have many of the opposite merits of the essays and fables. As a writer he was an exquisite with an elegiac feeling for the past; while as a caricaturist he was an outstanding innovator. His caricature of Pinero drawn in 1903 is in several respects as modern as a Brancusi. And while his perfectionism and dandyism made his writing dangerously precious, his drawings are unexpectedly spontaneous and free. This was partly because he always drew from memory, which meant he was forced to overlook inessentials. In the process he freed Victorian caricature from the stiffness and formality of, for instance, 'Spy' and 'Ape'. He also abandoned the convention of the enlarged head overbalancing the diminutive body and was able to emphasise what Dr Desmond Morris would probably call body language. No one has done more with the droop of a shoulder or the limpness of a foot.

Where exactly did Beerbohm's style come from? He may have been mildly influenced by the amateur doodles of country-house letter writers; also perhaps, at least in his colouring, by fairy-story illustrations of the time. But the extent of his originality can be perceived by the fact that no one drew remotely like him before or afterwards.

Dr Riewald sees the literary caricatures mainly as visual parodies. It is true that the literary parodies spring from the same affectionate detachment which make his caricatures so telling. But parodies depend on employing the style of the victim; Beerbohm's caricatures succeed because he found a style and viewpoint that was entirely his own. To be fair, Dr Riewald has performed a useful chore in annotating the literary background to each of the caricatures; but we value Beerbohm's drawing of Oscar Wilde not because of any literary insight, but because he shows us the epicene old lily-carrier in the too too sullied flesh.

The problem of reproducing Beerbohm today is a considerable one, with originals scattered and lost and colour apparently beyond the pocket of the average publisher. Even so, Dr Riewald's book is a disappointment. Printed in black and white (or rather grey and white), not only do the legends and balloons have to be repeated, but in one case we have to take Dr Riewald's word for it that Conrad entering the door on the right is smiling. Judging from a better contemporary reproduction it's nearer a snarl or a sneer – rather how this reviewer feels when faced with such a lost opportunity. Beerbohm once described his caricatures as 'seen through the fog of memory'. Here they seem to be printed through it too.

THE BURLINGTON MAGAZINE



November 1977

Special issue devoted to EUROPEAN ART SINCE 1950 with articles on C. R. Mackintosh, Bonnard and Bingerville, Soames Forsyte Collection, Picasso, Marcel Duchamp, Kupka, Nolde and Gauguin, Acquisitions of Modern Art by Museums

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Sweetness and Light

The 'Queen Anne' Movement 1860-1900

Mark Girouard

The 'Queen Anne' style of architecture flourished in the last forty years of the nineteenth century. Mark Girouard shows how it developed as the constrictions of rigid Gothicism were thrown off, and explores the move towards 'sweetness and light' and the wide variety of influences, from Japan to Amsterdam, with all the wit and learning that characterized his *Victorian Country House*. 215 black and white illustrations 8pp in colour £15

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Agnolo Gaddi

Bruce Cole

This book sets out to establish the corpus of works for which Agnolo Gaddi was personally responsible, and to define the influences that worked on him and the influence he exercised on others. It is the first full-scale study of Gaddi, and it shows him to have been an important force in Florentine art on the eve of the Renaissance. 48pp of plates. £12.50

Oxford Studies in the History of Art and Architecture

The Perfect Generosity of Prince Vessantara

Translated by Margaret Cone with an introduction by Richard Gombrich

The selfless generosity of Vessantara, who gave away everything, even his wife and children, is the most famous story in the Buddhist world. This beautifully illustrated translation of the original Pali introduces it in its oldest extant version to the English-speaking world. 25 plates (5 in colour). £11

Oxford University Press

Andrew Saint

House Style

Sweetness and Light: The 'Queen Anne' Movement 1860-1900 by MARK GIROUARD *Oxford* £15

Over the last 11 years Mark Girouard has written four books about English architecture, each a masterpiece, ranging from the Elizabethan country house to the Victorian pub. One can now catch the characteristics of a Girouard book: pace, learning worn lightly, elegance of phrase and presentation, and an unrivalled flair for cultural history. By this last I mean not the Germanic *Kulturgeschichte* but an instinct for picking out a culture's authentic tone from its art and literature, and bringing it to life. If Girouard has a weakness it is that of skirting 'difficulties of interpretation' that decoy the lesser historian; and this is done, not because he is unaware of them, but in case they mar the coherent image of the culture that is his aim.

The eclectic culture of 'Queen Anne', his latest subject, is also a timely one:

> The 1970s have certain resemblances to the 1870s. The Modern Movement, as doctrinaire and intolerant in its day as the Gothic Revival, has fallen even more heavily out of favour . . . Eclecticism is once more on the rampage, and once more children (and even parents) in Kate Greenaway clothes can be seen emerging from houses embellished with wallpapers by Morris and Walter Crane.

At the start of the book we are plunged into an unfashionable *tour de force*, an imaginative and brilliant recreation of that culture, derived almost wholly from literary sources: Thackeray, Arnold, Swinburne, Mrs Humphry Ward, and of course the elusive Pater. 'Queen Anne' (the inverted commas are *de rigueur* throughout) is presented principally as reaction against earlier severity, against fanaticism and Philistinism, Bible-thumping and money-grubbing.

Here and elsewhere, Girouard carefully avoids over-using the word 'aesthetic', with its connotations of detached amorality. The movement he describes may have forsaken severity but it did not lack seriousness, education being one of its foremost aims. 'Queen Anne' grew not just from a new generation's reaction, but also out of the humanity and zeal of the 'highest' of the 'High Victorians'. Henry Cole's Christmas cards, Ruskin's passionate plea for joy in work, and Sissy Jupe's illicit liking for floral carpets in *Hard Times* because she was 'very fond of flowers', were all harbingers of the freer but still-committed culture of the 1870s. 'Queen Anne', though outwardly misleading, is not such a bad name for it. It means something parallel to 'pre-Raphaelite', in this case a yearning for the supposed freedoms and graces of English manners under Addison and Steele, of English arts under Wren, and of English literature under Swift. Perhaps it is more than chance that Arnold lifted his famous phrase from Swift's *Battle of the Books*:

> whatever we have got, has been by infinite labour and search, and ranging through every corner of nature . . . Instead of dirt and poison, we have rather chosen to fill our hives with honey and wax, thus furnishing mankind with the two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light.

The honey and wax at the heart of this book is of course architecture. The author devotes a perceptive chapter to some of the accessories of 'Queen Anne', chiefly the pretty picture books of Crane, Caldecott and Greenaway, the much-neglected gardens of the time, and the finicky furnishings of a period when the upholsterer as tradesman was rapidly translating himself into the interior decorator as artist. But lest he entangle himself in the meshes of Bohemian aestheticism, Girouard has stuck for his main theme to the practical matter of architecture. Here too, 'Queen Anne' has a pre-history antedating the 1870s, when all that red brick, terracotta and Dutch gabling burst upon the delighted denizens of Kensington, Chelsea and Hampstead.

Then, as things will, it became successful and had to find antecedents. They were there to hand, both in the English brick houses of the 17th and early 18th centuries (which offered some authenticity for the label of 'Queen Anne'), and, especially for the town houses of the bourgeoisie, in the fabulous mercantile façades of a score of Netherlandish towns – Amsterdam, Bruges, Ghent, Lübeck and the like. Perhaps we could have been told more about this archaeological strain, since it was in town houses that the 'Queen Anne' style (Osbert Lancaster's Pont Street Dutch) reached its acme.

Ultimately, which of the two strains one prefers is a matter of taste. The great gaunt Board Schools by E. R. Robson, the sober houses of Webb, and the dainty compositions of Basil Champneys (the architect of Newnham, here for the first time revealed at his worth) stand on one side; on the other, the most accomplished architect was Ernest George, designer of the frothy houses of Harrington and Collingham Gardens and a host of others in town and country, such as the astounding Buchan Hill in Sussex. The heroes of the book, E. W. Godwin, W. E. Nesfield, Norman Shaw and J. J. Stevenson, are those who were able happily to combine these currents or transcend their limitations.

In later chapters, Girouard prefers not to account for the difficult transition in the later 1880s from 'Queen Anne' to what is equally loosely known as 'Arts and Crafts' architecture. Instead, he follows up the style's more insular and popular developments, both by provenance and by building type. We are whisked, in the quest for the truly 'vernacular' expression of Queen Anne, from the temperate bungalows and hotels of Cromer and Westgate to the boozy gin palaces of the 1890s, the style's last stand. Finally, Mark Girouard transports the reader across the Atlantic and leaves him, well content but scarcely sated, among the domestic masterpieces of the 'Shingle Style', the younger but even better-looking cousin of 'Queen Anne'.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Michael Moorcock

Anti-Personnel Capability

The USAF/McDonnell Douglas YC-15 is a tactical STOL transport prototype. It can fly 40% faster than the C-130 it is designed to replace. It can take off or land on short unimproved combat airstrips with typical payloads of:

6 cargo pallets and 40 troops at one time.
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Or, a 175 mm self-propelled gun.
Or, a M113A1 armored personnel carrier, an M551 armored recon/airborne assault vehicle, and a jeep.
Or, 8 jeeps.
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At the front.

Advertisement in *Interavia*, July 1977

The porn emporia of Tottenham Court Road, Princes Street, Praed Street and Bayswater stand side by side with the electronics shops. The same introverted faces, the same hunched shoulders in raincoats or sports jackets, move from one window to the next, studying the stock with the same peculiar mixture of passivity and intensity; specification manuals full of glossy photographs, chrome and black vinyl, written in a sensual, technical rhetoric so formalised as to have lost all real meaning, are carried home for private study. It is no coincidence that dirty book shops almost invariably put a few sf titles in their windows in a bid for respectability (mine are always popular . . .), or that girlie magazines publish an above-average percentage of anthropomorphic sf stories, and have done since the early days of *Playboy*. In 1946 Steve Frances was a founder of *New Worlds SF*. He later became better known as Hank Janson. Years later the publishers of the Hank Janson series bought *New Worlds* primarily because they thought it would give them enough respectability to get them accepted by W. H. Smith . . . Hugo Gernsback of *Popular Mechanics*, founder of the first specialised sf magazine *Amazing Stories*, ended his days as the editor/publisher of *Sexology*. It is also no coincidence that the majority of J. G. Ballard's moral fables study the relationship between technology and neurotic sexuality.

In private Cessna executive jets, in the first-class section of Boeing 747s, business men and military bureaucrats carry copies of *Penthouse* and *Interavia (World Review of Aviation, Astronautics, Avionics)* in silver-trimmed black leather brief-cases. They are, as it were, the top end of the market. Written well, the language of technology in its romantic intensity, its poetry, can teach us almost as much as Browning about how to handle complex ideas in a concentrated, lyrical form. The language found in *Interavia* is as specialised and as baffling to the lay reader as the language of the sex magazines, and usually has as little to do with most people's experience of reality. In this case both languages are potent shorthand, distancing rather than defining those terrors and power-fulfilment fantasies in some way affecting our lives, whether or not we share the obsessions. As in the girlie magazines one occasionally comes across good writing. But since the publications are primarily advertising media it is this aspect which is most striking. The advertising tells us most about the publishers and their audience.

Interavia's advertising is just a trifle more disturbing than *Penthouse*'s. The girlie magazines will offer us specialised sex films and photographs, masturbation aids and methods of attracting desired sexual partners or countering impotence: sexual security. *Interavia* advertises civil aircraft and electronics, but predominantly we are promised security in the form of weapons systems, missiles, fighters, rocket guidance systems, bombers, tanks. Just as ordinary human emotions are disqualified subject-matter in the majority of sex magazines, and words like 'grief', 'tenderness' or 'love' are rarely found in their true context, so words like 'death', 'kill', or 'war' are abolished from *Interavia* advertising and related editorial copy. Here is another (and rather mild) fragment of advertising:

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People are either 'passengers' or 'personnel'. At best they are 'pilots' and 'crew'. Machines designed to kill them have 'anti-personnel capability'. A daring copy-writer might refer to 'conflict areas'. This is specialised language reduced to the level of quasi-scientific euphemism. The vocabulary is abused in order to give a spurious ring of authority to aggressively cynical ideas. The copy-writers know very well what they are really talking about. They often know far more than they're saying. Arms salesmen are skilled Newspeakers with a jargon fundamentally identical to that of high-class pimps murmuring confidentially of 'studs' and 'eager' ladies. As in the brothel business, fear and guilt are subdued, but at a huge cost to the human spirit.

Any publication, whether it be technological, political or literary, which places individuals in emblematic roles must, it seems to me, be in some sense vicious. Soldiers, policemen and physicists, politicians, thieves and whores will assure us, with reasonable truth, that not all generals love the game of war, that not all policemen are euphoric about their power, that most physicists are humane and humorous, that politicians believe in individual justice, that thieves are often the kindest of creatures and that there is many a whore with a heart of gold. In common with other rational people I want to believe this. What distresses me and stretches my credulity, however, is when the soldiers, businessmen, journalists or whores are discovered persisting in their use of a debased and simplified jargon to dehumanise themselves and those they serve. Their self-deceiving contempt, born of protective cynicism, is possibly a more dangerous threat to liberal democracy than any opposing totalitarianism, the fear of which is constantly exploited by *Interavia*'s advertising.

Interavia also fulfils a straightforward demand for technical information; no doubt its editors and publishers would be offended by any suggestion that their magazine catered to some of the least attractive human vices. And that is why I shall continue to be a terrified, fascinated reader of every issue. In a world of shifting polarities one needs sophisticated guidance systems. With *Business Week*, *Interavia* remains among the best and cheapest available.

Opera

Eric Sams

Lust-Lacker

Acis and Galatea *Sadler's Wells*
Ezio *Sadler's Wells*
Euryanthe *Coliseum*
Salome *Covent Garden; further performance 22 November*

Any study of operatic form and favourites proves the importance of making a good book. According to my card, Acis won by a head from Salome, with Ezio a surprisingly close third. Euryanthe also ran, but not for long; it was helplessly hamstrung from the start by the bogus Romanticism of Helmina von Chezy, whose so-called plot is more like a conspiracy against the human intellect. Weber's culpable complicity has jeopardised if not forfeited the life of his opera. Translation at least allowed the audience to sympathise with the singers, who confided that they could no longer bear it, no, they could not bear it; a sentiment widely shared. Weber first died in London 150 years ago; it seemed heartless to re-enact that tragedy.

Handel too died in London; so did Italian opera, attacked by patriots and neglected by the public. In *Ezio* the extinct species is freshly preserved, like a mammoth in

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Siberia, by the rigorous technique of Metastasio. Every detail of the dramatic structure can be traced, thanks to skilled articulation of words and music. Given deft translation and alert direction, the stock conspiracy-plot remains genuinely intriguing. Costumes and scenery were vivid and inventive; among much eloquent performance, Anne Wilkens triumphed in the castrato part of the unconquered hero. In general, however, the succession of da capo arias was like a frieze of marbles, lacking warmth and life. The libretto, though quite gripping, failed to turn Handel on. Yet he was audibly kindled by Acis, as Strauss was by Salome. Moral: to excite an opera-composer, it helps to be Wilde or Gay.

This follows from the nature of the art-form itself. Music sounds immensely significant yet remains unspecific; so its closest verbal counterparts are myth and legend, which already contain the needful resonances and overtones. The aptest style is also quasi-musical, with words and ideas already dancing or singing on the page. The best librettists, therefore, are for example classical scholars, as well as (in Marlowe's words) 'wanton poets, pleasant wits, musicians'. Oscar Wilde's play of Salome offers incantatory prose and sensual imagery together with an ensemble of quarrelling Jews and a notorious dance-sequence. This material is readily adaptable as a libretto, and translates well into German. Salome herself slips easily into musical attire, all glittering trills and thudding pulse, jewelled without and lustful within like a gaudy blood-sucking insect.

Other percussive effects included the persistent click and rattle of released opera glasses, for the closer study of Grace Bumbry; justifiably, for she has been the brightest star of the season. Observe her quick glints of comprehension just before she elucidates a riddling speech from the Baptist; her sudden refulgence of diction and demeanour when declaring her illustrious name and rank; her radiant emergence from a cloud of veils; her occultation into pouting petulance when not instantly given her head. She is well supported, especially by Paul Crook as Herod. Josephine Veasey was effective but rather restrained as Herodias, while Norman Bailey's Baptist puzzlingly looked away from Salome all the time. That character is bound to seem lack-lustre if played as a lust-lacker; he is surely intended to confront fleshly temptation head on, while he still has the chance. Even his voice, however, was prematurely cut off, despite its sonority. The conductor, David Atherton, is a dedicated Straussian; and *Salome* might remain a masterpiece even as a symphonic poem with staged dumb-show. But in so manifestly word-inspired an opera, the inspiration is lost whenever the words are; and that was too often for my liking

Clarity was easier to attain in the lightly-textured *Acis and Galatea*. But the chorus of happy shepherds went sadly astray, and so did the comic business of Ian Wallace's Polypheme. A Cyclops with one eye on the audience risks missing the Handelian vision. So did the staging, in my view. Even masques need recognisable features; the required rural prospect is not best represented by a formal garden, nor the slaying of Acis by a suddenly blood-red backcloth. But all the rest was, in Gay's phrase, a soft delight. His text has never had enough acclaim, either in musical or literary history, whether for acclimatising Handel to English words (long before the Congreve, Milton, Dryden, Pope or Biblical settings) or for unsealing such a fount of ebullient operatic melody, without precedent in its day and without rival until *Trial by Jury*. Anthony Rolfe Johnson as Acis did it exemplary justice, especially with his sensitive legato singing above the stave. The star quality of Joy Roberts grows steadily brighter with each appearance. On this showing and that of *Ezio* the Handel Opera Society deserves every support for the good works it performs.

Art

John Spurling

Blots

The Paintings of J. M. W. Turner by MARTIN BUTLIN and EVELYN JOLL *Yale* 2 vols £65
Turner *Tate Gallery*

Although my lectern will cope with the volume labelled 'Text' (weighing 4 pounds) there's no easy way of consulting the other volume labelled 'Plates' (weighing 5½ pounds), since most of them have to be looked at from the side. No doubt my desk is too small and my typewriter too large, no doubt many of those who will buy the book already employ a footman who can hold it up and turn the pages; the fact is that there is probably no lighter, cheaper or simpler answer to the problem of cataloguing all Turner's oil-paintings (some 550) and giving each, even the ruined ones, a full-page reproduction to itself. The book is a monument to a monument.

It might be argued that, with so many Turners permanently on view at the National Gallery and the Tate (not to mention Somerset House, where they will never be on view if the Tate can prevent it), English art-buffs hardly need an *aide-mémoire* on this scale; but that would be to underrate the importance of being thoroughly familiar with a painting before you can settle down to enjoy it. About half the plates are in colour and even those in black-and-white are large enough to give a good idea of composition, tone and detail. The text contains, as well as all the usual dry minutiae of provenance, date, exhibition history, etc., extensive quotes from contemporary criticism, so that one is jolted out of a hypnotised worship of the timeless, sanctified master into a sense of his being freshly at it, vilified, admired, misunderstood, even occasionally ignored. How old, for instance, is that gibe about hanging a picture the other way up? It was used by two critics to ridicule Turner's memorial to David Wilkie, *Peace – Burial at Sea*, first exhibited in 1842. As for its companion piece, *War – The Exile and the Rock Limpet*, that was 'a greater absurdity than ever', 'truly ludicrous', 'an elongated Napoleon . . . running to seed in a redhot atmosphere of brimstone and brickdust'. Fair comment, actually, though Ruskin admired the painting for its moral content.

Turner was a dreadful figure-painter. He could make shift with small crouching shapes under a snow-storm or in a wild sea, but the nymphs in his early, Claude-inspired view of the Thames near Richmond, *Thomson's Aeolian Harp*, are stuffed sacks; and his much later *Reclining Venus*, unfinished but intended to invite comparison with Titian's *Venus of Urbino*, rivals only Branwell Brontë. Worst of all is the would-be comic conversation-piece, *The Unpaid Bill, or the Dentist Reproving his Son's Prodigality*, commissioned by a connoisseur who already owned Rembrandt's 'sublime' *Holy Family* to be its 'ridiculous' counterpart. For such an ambitious man Turner was remarkably compliant with the demands of patrons.

But it was of course his 'laxity of form and licence of effect' (the *Spectator* reviewing *Rain, Steam and Speed* in 1844) which chiefly upset contemporaries. Lord Egremont probably asked for the deer, swans and waterfowl to be added to the paintings of Petworth Lake because he thought the sketches too vague, and his lordship's butler said that Turner (whose manners he didn't like) grew savage after an altercation over the foreground of *Brighton from the Sea*, when Egremont tested carrots and turnips in a tub of water to prove that they didn't float. As early as 1803, Fuseli found Turner's foregrounds 'too little attended to' and Sir George Beaumont thought them 'comparatively *blots*', but these criticisms remain valid: the foregrounds often seem to be no more than a cleared space or run-up for the mighty feats to be performed between distance and middle-distance.

It is harder to sympathise with the critics' strictures on Turner's earliest masterpiece in oil, the so-called *Bridgewater Seapiece*, which became the picture of the year in 1801 at the RA. The *Porcupine* spoke of '*carelessness* and *obscurity* so that we hardly ever see a firm determined outline in anything he does', and the *Star* warned that

> this *liberal* stile of painting may fascinate for a while but the sober observer of Nature requires more to satisfy him fully of the pre-eminent claims of an artist than can be found in a picture totally without outlines.

Constable and Fuseli, however, admired it and even Beaumont did at first, though he later grew spiteful and said that Van der Velde's picture *A Rising Gale* (also in the Bridgewater collection and to which Turner's picture was commissioned as a pendant) 'made Turner's *sea* appear like pease soup'. The comparison with the Van der Velde was revived in 1837 when both paintings were publicly displayed together and *Blackwood's Magazine*, an inveterate enemy of Turner, complained that 'the water is certainly not liquid'. To our eyes the *Bridgewater Seapiece* must appear the least 'liberal', most careful, most outlined and solid oil that Turner ever painted, perhaps if anything too much so.

This painting with other lesser-known ones, mostly on loan and mostly from Tur-

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ner's formative period as a painter in oils, compose a special exhibition at the Tate to mark the publication of the book. Apart from the newly-cleaned *Thomson's Aeolian Harp*, the unspeakable *Unpaid Bill* and *Grand Junction Canal*, there's a soft greeny-brown Savoyard landscape with the mountains rising in powerful diagonals to end in ragged turned-back tops like meringues fresh from the oven; two vertiginous views of the St Gothard Pass; and a still Cumberland landscape whose effect is that of the garden Alice in Wonderland couldn't enter: a delicately lit cottage among grey-green trees set behind the massive darkly-shadowed barrier of a bridge running straight across the centre of the canvas. It's left to two late seascapes to remind us how far Turner travelled from the *Bridgewater Seapiece*. There the philosophy of Beaumont and *Blackwood's* is washed incontinently overboard in a welter of formless colour and licentious liquidity.

Television

Julian Barnes

Nooseday

ITV's version of Sunday morning purveys life in daunting microcosm – 9.30 *All About Babies*; 10.00 *Being a Child*; 11.00 *Happy Days*: *Fonzie's Getting Married* – rather like one of those speeded-up botanical films of a flower opening. In which case, the worm in the bud this week was definitely Brian Walden, whose timely and trenchant *Weekend World* (LWT) dissected practical medical questions of whom you allow to die. Technical advances now mean, oddly, that more people die unnecessarily, for financial not medical reasons: Walden investigated brain-damaged patients in 'a persistent vegetable state' (as the profession puts it), who may live for years, and can cost £1,000 a week to keep in intensive care. The easy, reflex answers – no price put on human life is too high, etc – were choked off by three things: the distraught mother of a teenager who had died after six years of prolonged and empty 'life' ('When it finishes you're so glad'); some hard shots of dutiful, futile physiotherapy on the rigid Belsen limbs of a deep-coma case; and the parallel example of kidney patients. At present, people in need of dialysis (especially if old) who could, with a kidney machine, live a relatively normal life, have to be told that they're going to die because of lack of cash. So who decides who dies? Or, indeed, does anyone decide – perhaps the matter is settled unwittingly by some Whitehall man deciding financial allocations. Walden unfortunately didn't pursue this trail in a rightfully harrowing programme marred only by the most distasteful cut of the week: from a trailer for Part Two showing neurosurgeons delving into the human brain to an advert for the steaming goo of Batchelor's steak pie fillings.

BBC's Russian week was a rather strange,

Tonight on ITV, Jonathan Dimbleby reports from Chile four years after Allende's overthrow. Filmed secretly and smuggled back to Britain, THIS WEEK reveals, for the first time, the truth about life and death under the Pinochet regime.

THIS WEEK tonight at 9.30pm on ITV.

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half-cock affair. To start commemorating the 60th anniversary of Soviet rule with an evening each of those two Bolshevik maestros, Mussorgsky and Tchaikovsky, indicated a lack of either confidence or historical grasp. Various camera crews filmed various frontmen in Red Square with various directions. Anatoly Karpov (*Where Karpov is King*, BBC-2) showed a few seconds of tight, obsessive personality – 'One who has not seen a game of chess is in my opinion an unhappy person' – before Paul Jennings backtracked into an idiot's guide to the game. *The Money Programme* (BBC-2) flew two British Leyland men to the Togliatti car plant where the works director said, of course, that the workers 'are overfulfilling the plan'. Interesting detail – the Soviet car driver, for instance, always takes his windscreen wipers with him (like bicycle clips) when he parks, otherwise they will be pinched – was usually submerged by sonorous jargon from reporter Colin Chapman: 'To foster change is to challenge the monolith', and so on.

Jargon from the other side was just as rife in *The Book Programme* (BBC-2). Unless there was a particularly malicious translator at work, the Moscow bookpeople interviewed by Robert Robinson fell clearly into two categories, bearing out Orwell. The first category talked in vague optimistic generalities: 'we do indeed still have a paper shortage but the shortage is being overcome'; 'at the end of the Fifties certain changes occurred in the life of the country'; 'for certain political, historical and economic reasons we indeed are to a certain extent isolated'. This category was personified by a plump time-server from the Writers' Union who plaited his own noose out of doubletalk and hanged himself without noticing the difference. The second category spoke in specifics about the conditions under which a writer actually operates. This category had been expelled from the Writers' Union and was very brave. He was, of course, a category of one.

Not that our own Western fad of democratic public consultation held up very well in *Public Hearing* (BBC-2), the first of bumbly old George Scott's new series. Blandly chummy programme-makers fought a howl of feedback and an echo-chamber acoustic in Ebbw Vale Leisure Centre to ignore the views of the locals. The programme was so overmanned and chaotic that it couldn't get anywhere, but its immobility was revealing. Three nasty extracts from *Target* were shown, and the audience were allowed to say how nasty they thought they were. Graeme McDonald, head of BBC serials, then comforted them by telling about the *even nastier* bits which he, after virtuous agonising, had lopped out; James Cellan-Jones, head of BBC plays, waffled about 'a caring society' and *King Lear*; and Philip Hinchcliffe, *Target*'s producer, most arrogantly of all explained that he didn't set out to make a violent show, but a popular and exciting one: 'By and large, the audience wants to be gripped, wants to be excited.' But there *was* the audience, right in front of him, telling him it didn't want to be gripped and excited in the way he did it, thank you very much – an opinion he was clearly planning to ignore.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Heady Stuff

Sons of Light *Other Place, Stratford*
The Elephant Man *Hampstead*
The Funniest Man in the World *Stratford East*
Lavender Blue *Cottesloe*

David Rudkin's *Sons of Light* looks and sounds like the fruit of a collaboration between Tolkien and Edward Bond, with additional dialogue by Bunyan; and it is said at one time to have run nearly as long as *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Lord of the Rings* combined. It has now been clipped to three hours, but it is still a work of reckless imagination, a daredevil leap into the outer reaches of the dramatically unfashionable and unruly. Pity the poor scribe who tries to cram it into his killing-bottle and whip it away to the dissecting-room for clinical analysis. 'I look forward to reading your explanation of this,' a member of the audience called to a fellow-critic with a deadline half-an-hour away: 'So do I,' he wanly replied as he scampered off into Stratford's, and his own, thick night.

Well, the structure may sprawl, but it does have three distinct yet linked levels: a story per storey, so to speak. A minister and his sons come to 'bring light' to an offshore island populated by glum Christian stoics austerely dressed in black, and are promptly ostracised for their presumption and blasphemy. That is the first floor. Beneath them, in the play's cellars and the island's catacombs, an army of helot zombies hews away at the rock, watched over by a leather-girt sadist named Holst, who cheerfully tortures and dismembers those who incur his disapproval. And from somewhere in the attic a sinister scientist in dark glasses watches, organises and records the doings below with the help of a lady bureaucrat in a white coat. This amiable duo is presumably responsible for the biological-engineering botch-ups who come giggling onstage and pitch one of the minister's sons to his death. But there's little point in trying to fill in all the details of what's less a plot than a guided tour through both Jungian and Freudian labyrinths, adding up to – well, what?

Perhaps the clearest clue comes when the crippled islander who likes to lumber through the subterranean slave-state in a golden gown and crown gets his well-merited come uppance. 'I am the king of heads,' he announces, just a few moments before he's torn apart by his rampaging serfs, 'Head only is a man – not filth below.' So there we have it, in last words rather typical of the play's verbal affections. Mr Rudkin's subject is what happens when the head runs arrogantly amok, forgetting it's attached to the rest of the body: a sort of cerebral chauvinism responsible (as he sees it) for puritanical bigotry, the callousness of science, the miseries of modern industry, and much else. I have to confess to a faint feeling of disappointment that all these giddy happenings should end by reducing themselves to so commonly reiterated a notion; and yet it seems ungrateful to complain, because the sum effect is no more platitudinous than, let's say, a Lawrence essay as it might have been dramatised by the Brothers Grimm. Altogether, it's a bizarre evening: overblown, maybe even over-the-top, but undeniably refreshing in the context of an English stage usually so stingy with its imagination and skimpy in its invention.

Ron Daniels is the director entrusted with orchestrating the largish RSC cast, and he does the job pretty well, getting sound performances from Peter McEnery, Nigel Terry and others, and a strikingly vivid one from Charlotte Cornwell as a female version of Shakespeare's Edgar, a schizophrenic vagrant in whom natural instinct and imprinted prejudice are noisily at war, just as they are in the play itself. But the week's most ambitious acting turns up at Hampstead: David Schofield, twisting and stuttering his way through the part of the 19th-century grotesque John Merrick, and, without benefit of make-up, somehow convincing us that he is indeed a mass of flabby pouches and cauliflower bulges abysmally ugly on the outside and strangely sensitive within.

A pity Bernard Pomerance's play isn't as consistent as Mr Schofield. The first half is often very touching, perhaps because it's unpretentiously factual, following the hapless Merrick from fairground freak-shows to sanctuary in the London Hospital, where he spent the last years of his short life. There he became a sort of monument, much visited by the great, up to the fringes of the royal family; and it's at this point that the author's contemporary conscience begins to tilt things, insidiously transforming an original piece of reportage into yet another ritual protest against the nob class. He isn't content to use his magnifying glass on Merrick: he must impugn the motives of those who befriended him and expose the biases and blindnesses of the society to which they belonged. This is in every sense an error, because Mr Pomerance's grasp of the concrete is much stronger than his command of general ideas, most of which turn out to be sketchy as well as second-hand. If I were Roger Rees, whose direction seems mostly very sensible, I'd have packed him back to his eyrie with orders to forget the word 'should' and, instead, to piece together the play he *could* have written.

The world's 'funniest man' is Dan Leno, a dubious proposition that remains unproved by Sam Kelly, bright and breezy in the part, but scarcely hilarious. More biography, less music hall, would make a more engrossing evening. And John Mackendrick's *Lavender Blue* is about the impotence of social workers over-run by adult infants playing nasty and sometimes murderous games: sensational stuff, some of this, redeemed by the author's pained sincerity and obvious knowledge of his subject, but also spoiled by cumbersome dialogue.

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Radio

Eric Korn

Sit Com

'I thought that was a very laughable piece,' remarked John Masefield's gardener once, of a production of *Macbeth*. This vintage drop came from John Ebdon (Radio 4), the latest bibber to be sent down into the BBC archives to sample a cask here and there, to emerge orotund and fruity ('If you have been, thank you for listening,' he concluded waggishly.) But are they laying down enough of the '77? Fearless in pursuit of the laughable piece, I attended to *Albert and Me*, Radio 2's warm-hearted rib-tickler about silly chump unattached father (Richard Beckinsale) and baby. He's put the rates money on a horse, ho ho. And it loses. Oh my sainted aunt, hold me up somebody. Not lacking in smart topical digs too: 'This clock was made at the Dagenham Clock Works in 1936.' 'Is that rare?' 'It works, and that's rare for anything from Dagenham.' They call it a sit-com; near enough, given the dirty-nappy jokes.

Middle-class silly chump favourite Ian Carmichael is running as Basil Boothroyd's entry for the nag-and-whinny stakes, *The Small, Intricate Life of Gerald C. Porter* (Radio 4, Wednesdays). He's a writer, Charlotte Mitchell his chumpess and fellow writer, with that tone of brightly indefatigable malice thought to characterise the literary world: 'They don't always make themselves clear, these romantic novelists,' he muses: 'it comes of putting all those dots at the end of bedroom scenes (h'm sniff pause) . . . at the beginning of bedroom scenes actually.'

Meanwhile, Pam Ayres helped Radio 2 celebrate the tenth anniversary of local radio with some lines on a battery hen: 'I never lays them late,/I always lays them right./I never lays them brown,/I always lays them white.' Time they let her range freely about the barnyard and cluck up some calcium.

A more noteworthy anniversary was celebrated in *Whatever Happened to the Revolution*? (Radio 4). Assorted hacks and explainers were delicately scalloped by Erik de Mauny: 'People are over-rating terribly what happened under Stalin: it was only a really thin layer of the intelligentsia that was really affected.' More wholesome noises came from the Bolshoi's *Boris Godunov*, with Radio 3 providing high quality sound in simulcast with BBC-2. It was Pretenders' night on the wireless, Pseudo-Dimitry coinciding with Charles III of England and Scotland. Bruce Stewart's play about the soggy stump of Jacobitism, *Our Roman Cousins* (Radio 4), had a wonderful meeting between the middle-aged Young Pretender, stewed to the gills, and Pope Clement XV who is, not to beat about the bush, bananas: 'Your wee Pope's daft,' quips Bonnie PC.

Among much good drama, J. B. Priestley's *The Carfitt Crisis* contained a Northern industrialist trembling under his bluff, various ugly secrets, precognitive dreams and visiting mystery man with bland inquisitorial manner, inside information and strange powers: I have been here before. There was a markedly intemperate portrait of an American teenager, snarling at what she kept calling 'squaresville', and aptly played by an actress with an unreasoning hatred of American speech patterns. Bracingly unfamiliar was Heinrich von Kleist's amazing uterine epic, *Penthesilea* (World Drama, Radio 3); Robert Nye's adaptation made what might have been a faded Gothic grotesque into a racy classical rendering of R. D. Laing's knotty studies in incompatible responses, with Achilles and Penthesilea like two energetic protons, kept apart by their charge. Barbara Jefford played the raging Queen with zest, and David Cain's sound score kept things on the boil.

By contrast, the sound effects in *Nelson* (Radio 4, Thursday evening) made signals familiar to every one: winds howled, canvas creaked, cannons roared. Peter James has not invented a word of dialogue, and the authenticity shows. Edward Woodward makes the man more genuinely heroic, more likeable and liked, than you'd expect. While still an infant, he'd sailed the West Indies and the East, been pursued by polar bears and yellow fever and come back for more: 'If your Lordships should be pleased to appoint me to a cockle boat I should be grateful.' And the Navy loved him: 'I never set eyes on him, for which I was sorry and glad: all the men that have seen him are such soft toads they do nothing but blast their eyes and weep.'

Checkpoint (Radio 4, Thursdays 7.20 pm) is good parish-pump ombudstuff. Do you have to put a rubbish tip in the best-kept village? 'Well,' said Mr Spokesfellow, 'It's going to be visually screened, it's not going to last forever, and it's got to go somewhere' a nice example of three reasons being weaker than one, like Mark Twain's 'I'm a teetotaller, I never drink before breakfast and besides I've had six already.' Echoes of the same strategy could be heard in the BBC's announcement of the new distribution of wavelengths.

John Coleman's column will resume next week.

Weekend Competition

No 2490 **Set by Paddy Field**

A 42-year-old bachelor was advertising for a bride this month in the London *Evening Standard* – in verse. Judging from his ability to rhyme and scan, we'd say he's probably still single. Now if you lot were to write, say, up to 12 lines describing your requirements, we're sure there would be a stampede. By 2 December.

Result of No 2487 **Set by Al Fresco**

We asked you for eight lines of verse using the words *scrimshaw, tackle, pig, Euston, feckless, soap, urbanely* and *blush*, with four of them appearing at the end of a line.

Report **by Fat Jeff**

One of those weeks when you ought to have given more thought to what your fellow-competitors were up to: how many times do you think a judge wants to read about scrimshawing sailors in trains pulling out of Euston who bring blushes to the cheeks of girls who call them pigs? Nor do we want to hear about people who are compelled to be both feckless and reckless just to help you out at the end of a line. £6 apiece, though, to keep you sweet, but Partridge withheld, even for the devious and rule-bending Hamill.

Pornoggers is a naughty cat: he joins the evening rush
From Euston or from Waterloo to make commuters blush.
He plants a bawdy scrimshaw or some phallic-fashioned soap
On seats, in loos and corridors; and always lives in hope
To hear a feckless passenger accuse her neighbour vainly –
'You filthy pig!' or 'What a man!' – and then he leaves urbanely.
Undoing zips, unzipping ids, he tiptoes on to tackle
His nightly work, his wicked wish – to raise a Whitehouse hackle.

LAURENCE FOWLER

In his necklet of scrimshaw, acquired in a grope
With a sailor in Euston, and scented with soap,
Went Bunnies, urbanely, with never a blush,
To tackle Top People for cash for his hush.
Whereat, it is said, they waxed ruthless and reckless
And hired to erase him a person quite feckless,
Who, cocking a pistol and drawing on a cig.,
Dispatched Bunnies' dog and was nabbed by a pig.

J. C. F. BARNES

Feckless London coaster with tackle-fouled mainmast
Curtseying urbanely in the blush-red dusk
With a cargo of air-fans for train-gassed
Euston; pig meal, soap and scrimshaw from the culled seal tusk.

GERRY HAMILL

There's Spinks wot spiels urbanely but as gormless as a brush
There's Pearce 'oo swears profanely lahd enough ter make yer blush
Mulvaney's wild an' reckless but gits rahnd yer wiv sorf' soap
Oi' Whitey's weird an' fackless 'cos 'e's 'ooked on mefs an' dope
There's mee . . . an my mate Scrimshaw wot finks 'e's bleedin' big
Sarcastic an' bombastic wiv the manners of a pig;
The coppers they despises us . . . we's difficult to tackle
Six good-fer-nuffin' layabahts at Euston 'tabernacle'.

J. J. WEBSTER

Grimshaw the scrimshaw man, covered with soap,
Pig-headed and feckless, a bit of a dope,
Glanced in the mirror and smiled urbanely,
Not hearing his wife begin giggling insanely,
As she heaved with a cackle on a large block and tackle,
So it smashed in his head with a squelch and a crackle,
Then she packed in a rush, gave a maidenly blush,
And ran off to Euston, and married a lush.

BARBARA RAWLINGS

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Tony Miles

Chess

No 59 September Problems

The September problems were, I thought, an easy lot. However, a remarkable number of entrants completely missed the point of **problem 50 (8/Bk5p/1P3Pr1/5K2/8/8/8/8)** – 1. P-B7, R-B8; 2. B-N8! – instead trying to prove a draw by an obscure King manoeuvre. I feel that this is a fine example of the value of optimism in chess: had the position been set as 'White to play and win', it would have been virtually impossible to get wrong.

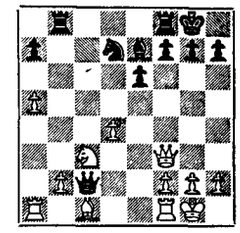
Problem 48 (5rk1/Qp5p/3pp1p1/4n3/2P1P2q/5r1P/P3NPP1/3R1RK1) was taken from a game, Robatsch-Hug Biel '77, which is worth giving in full: **1. P-QB4, P-KN3; 2. P-K4, B-N2; 3. P-Q4, P-Q3; 4. N-QB3, N-KB3; 5. B-K2, 0-0; 6. N-B3; B-N5; 7. 0-0, KN-Q2; 8. P-Q5, N-R3; 9. B-K3, QN-B4; 10. B-Q4, B x N; 11. KB x B, B x B; 12. Q x B, P-K4; 13. P x P ep, P x P; 14. P-QN4, N-K4; 15. P x N, R x B; 16. P x P, P x P; 17. QR-Q1, Q-B3; 18. N-K2, R-KB1; 19. Q x RP, Q-R5; 20. P-KR3 and now 20 . . .R x RP! 21. P x R.** After the alternative 21. N-N3 black has a choice of lines. Simplest is 21. . . .N-N5 (intending R-R8ch and Q-R7 mate) and if 22. P x R, Q x RP; 23. KR-K1, Q-R7ch; 24. K-B1, R x Pch or 22. KR-K1, R x N; 23. K-B1, R-K6! Of the offers 21. . . .R-R8ch; 22. N x R, N-N5 is adequate but unnecessarily messy – 23. KR-K1, Q-R7ch, 24. K-B1, Q x Nch; 25. K-K2, Q x P; 26. R-KB1, and 21. . . .N-B6ch; 22. P x N, R x Nch; 23. P x R, Q x Pch; 24. K-R1 is also not completely clear after either 24. . . . R-B5; 25. Q-N8ch and Q-Q8 or 24. . . . R x BP; 25. Q-N8ch followed by Q x NPch and R x R. My own favourite is that suggested by Mr C. Allen: 21. . . .N-B6ch; 22. P x N, R-R7! and white is helpless to prevent Q-R6-N7 mate. **21. . . .N-B6ch;** 21. . . .R-B6; 22. Q-N8ch is not so good e.g. . . .K-N2; 23. Q x QP, Q-N4ch drawing. **22. K-N2, Q x KP.** And white has no defence to the assorted threats, e.g. 23. R-KN1, N-Q5ch or 23. K-N3, Q-K4ch. The game concluded **23. K-R1, N-K8ch; 24. P-B3, R x P; 25. K-N1, R-N6ch Resigns.**

Finally an amusing footnote to **problem 46 (3R1r1k / 5q1p / 4Qp1b / p3nP2 / 1p6 / 7P / PPPR2P1/7K)** which, I am informed, is given in a book by the Soviet GM Kotov. My old friend Bernard Cafferty, who is translating the book, tells me that when he met Kotov recently he suggested that the position was a poor example (because of 1. R(2)-Q7, Q-N1! as pointed out by many NS solvers). Kotov retorted that it couldn't be since it had been used in a Moscow TV chess course, and thousands of viewers examined all the positions carefully and always wrote in if anything was wrong. He was rather taken aback by 1. . . . Q-N1! NEW STATESMAN solvers 1 Moscow viewers 0!

September prizewinners were Messrs Taylor, Brooks, MacLean and Abrahams.

Problem 59

White to play. How should the game go? Answers to me at the NS postmarked not later than 30 November.

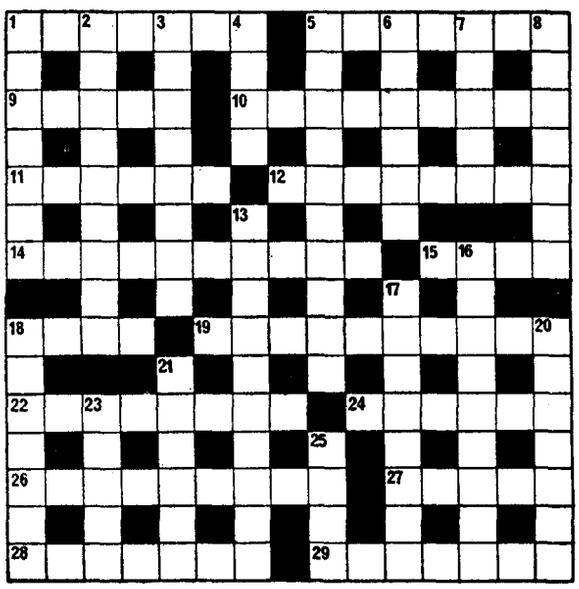


Solution to Problem 57

Indifferent. 1. Q x P, R-QB3; 2. R x Pch (not 2. Q x NP – explanation later) N x R; 3. R x Nch, K x R (not 3. . . .K-R1; 4. P-K6!) 4. P-K6ch, K-R3! 5. Q-B4ch, K-R4; 6. Q x Pch, K-N5! with a draw by perpetual check. But since white stands slightly better in the initial position 1. Q x P is not best.

Weekend Crossword 1242

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1242, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 29 November.



ACROSS

1. With two places in which to sleep during one's confinement (7).
5. The country for a composer (7).
9. The old bowler is stony broke (5).
10. My main toy is broken – hence bitter feelings (9).
11. Everyone in a depression returning with an unhealthy colour (6).
12. Tough guys go in to examine the violent (8).
14. It gives time for a drink with an old test bowler after a century (10).
15. Look for a match (4).
18. Protection for legs which some have underfoot (4).
19. In a sense the German is tortuous (10).
22. Unusual person who takes one drink during exam (8).
24. Novel heroine who gets it all wrong about love (6).
26. Workers' organisations don't quite turn to the right (9).
27. After a man this bird is something poisonous (5).
28. A foreigner whether or not he is after a penny (7).
29. Stuffy broadcast serials (7).

DOWN

1. The pact was broken, and he was the instrument (7).
2. Different lads unite although segregated (9).
3. I have a go at following a gang in crime (8).
4. Cart which has a number on its shaft (4).
5. It is colourful when I journey over the trail (10).
6. Calls up all right amid women (6).
7. Remain with man carrying fish (5).
8. 'So sinks the —— in the ocean bed' (Milton) (7).
13. Dramatic technique puts a story before people (10).
16. Get rid of since it is time a line changed (9).
17. He sees only part of the ship is in the drink (8).
18. Tender but going bad in the middle (7).
20. Things worn in part of India on English river? (7).
21. Town where one group gets up about four (6).
23. South Americans enter to win cash prizes (5).
25. 'There is too much —— and she is too old' (Kipling) (4).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1240

M	A	N	I	C	U	R	E		T	R	O	P
A		I		O		E			E		O	O
D	E	C	L	A	I	M	S		S	P	A	S
A		E		T		I			R		E	S
M	E	S	S	I	A	N	I	C		E	X	I
S		T			I		A		S	D		T
			B	A	S	I	N	G	S	T	O	K
O		S		O		C		D	E		N	D
F	R	E	E	W	H	E	E	L	E	D		
F		L		S		N		E			L	E
E	X	A	C	T		T	E	S	T	T	R	I
R		N		R			T		O		O	D
I	N	G	R	I	D		V	I	O	L	E	N
N		O		N			C		E		E	R
G	A	R	A	G	E		S	K	I	T	T	L

Prizewinners to No 1240

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The General Manager,
Manchester Polytechnic Students' Union
Cavendish House, All Saints,
Manchester M15 6BG

by 24 November 1977. Interviews will be held on Thursday 1 December 1977. Further details are available on request.

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREW

LECTURESHIP IN POLITICS

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Applications (two copies preferably in typescript) with the names of three referees should be lodged by 31 December 1977 with the Establishments Officer, The University, College Gate, St Andrews, Fife, from whom further particulars may be obtained.

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Further particulars and application forms may be obtained from the Association of Commonwealth Universities (Appts), 36 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PF, or the Assistant Secretary (Recruitment), University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong.

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Courses

Continued from p. 712

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Further particulars and application forms may be obtained from the Secretary to the Tutor for Admissions, St Antony's College, Oxford. The closing date for applications is 15 January 1978.

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NEW STATESMAN

Vol. 94 No. 2435

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Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE (Royal Shakespeare Country wife', 'The Plough & The Stars', info: 836 5332. Ibsen's 'Pillars of the Community', 'The Comedy of Errors', 'The Days of the Commune'. See daily press for dates and times. RSC also at The Warehouse at Donmar Theatre with: C. P. Taylor's 'Bandits', Howard Barker's 'That Good Between Us', James Robson's 'Factory Birds' (all unsuitable for children) & at Piccadilly Theatre, in 'Wild Oats & Savoy Theatre in 'Man & Superman'.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE. 722 9301. 'The Elephant Man' by Bernard Pomerance. Evs. 8 p.m. 'A compulsive & beautiful play' . . . Times. 'Not to be missed' . . . Guardian.

NATIONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. 'The Country Wife', 'The Plough & The Stars', 'Volpone', 'The Madras House', 'State of Revolution', 'Bedroom Farce', 'Half Life', 'Babel's Dances'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded info: 928 2256.

ROYAL COURT. 730 1745. Prev. Tues. 22 Nov. at 8. Opens Wed. 7 p.m. subs eves 8 p.m. 'Talbot's Box'.

THEATRE ROYAL, WINDSOR. 95 61107. 'Two and Two Make Sex' by Richard Harris and Leslie Darbon.

ARTS THEATRE. 836 3334

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Meetings

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, Gower St, WC1E 6BT. Lunch Hour Lectures, 1.20 to 2. Admission free. 22 Nov. 'Language, a Hindrance to Understanding' by Professor C. A. B. Smith; 24. Nov. 'The Man who could have saved the Roman Empire' by Mr R. I. Ireland.

ANDRE BABEAU, Professeur à l'Université de Paris X, will give a lecture on 'L'accumulation du patrimoine en France' on Tuesday 22 November at 6.15 p.m. at the French Institute, Queensberry Place. SW7. 01-589 6211 ext. 38. Admission free.

'POVERTY & THE ARMS TRADE' — talk by Sandy Merritt in conjunction with Oxfam, at the Africa Centre, 38 King St, Covent Garden. Tuesday 22 November 6.30 p.m. Admission 50p, students 25p.

'ENGLAND: A POLICE STATE?', talk by William Birtles of the NCCL. London Young Humanists, 13 Prince of Wales Terr., W8. Sun. 20 Nov. 7.30 p.m. Adm. 30p.

CENTRAL LONDON FABIAN SOCIETY. A speaker on 'Direct Elections & the EEC'. 23 Nov. 7.30 p.m. 51 Argyle St, WC1. (Basement of new building) nr King's Cross Station. All welcome. Collection.

HOWARD LEAGUE FOR PENAL REFORM. Director, Martin Wright will speak at the William Temple Association (London Branch), Wed. 23 Nov. 7.30 for 8 p.m. Liddon House, 24 South Audley St, W1.

RACE AND IMMIGRATION CONTROL. Sunday 20 Nov. Ian Martin of Joint Council for Welfare of Immigrants will review new British Nationality law plus discussion on Racism in Britain Today, at 37 Broadhurst Gdns, NW6, 8 p.m. Members 20p, non-mems 50p. Organised by Young Mapam.

ALBANIA: AN EXAMPLE TO THE WORLD. Friday 25 November, 7.30 p.m. Conway (Small) Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. Organised by New Albania Society.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE, 23 Norfolk Sq., W1. Sun. 20 Nov. Swami Bhavyananda on 'The Unconscious and the Science of Yoga' at 5 p.m. All welc.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY, 58 Eccleston Square, London SW1. Tues. 22 Nov. 6.30 p.m. 'Introducing Buddhism'. Wed. 23 Nov. 6.30 p.m. Tibetan Buddhism and Theravada Buddhism, two study classes. All welcome. Send s.a.e. for full programme.

THEOSOPHY. Simple talks for inquirers. Sun. 20 Nov. 8 p.m. 'Karma & Reincarnation'. S.a.e. free pamphlet, programme, booklist. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, W2.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY in England, 50 Gloucester Place, W1. 01-935 9261. Public Lectures on 'The Secret Doctrine'. Sundays 20 & 27 Nov., 4 Dec. at 7 p.m.

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Monday 21 November at 8 p.m.
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Courses—cont. on p. 711

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Do we have a moral right to hold such folk in gaol while their innocence is proved? In borderline cases, couldn't they be in, say, a one-star hotel and grounds, with perimeter security?

Will you help us, please, to set up such a Retreat? It could also be an alternative to prison for emotionally disturbed women. (We're not "forcing anything new" on the law, for the courts would only make use of this Retreat when they felt great compassion for defendants and did not wish to gaol them).

The woman concerned would give a pledge to the court to stay in the Retreat for as many months as the judge or J.P. wished; so the public would be just as safe as if she were in open prison . . . but this would be enclosed freedom, instead. And we would run it like a convalescent home, giving sympathetic help to women with severe personal problems.

We need money for this scheme. You can see how gaol is hurting Joyce. Please won't you hurt yourself just a little to spare women such agony? (Also, please write to the Home Secretary, House of Commons, London, urging support for this Retreat scheme, and bail for Joyce).

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